

Casimir Pulaski & Michael Kováts ►► *Fathers of the American Cavalry*

American Spirit

DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

MAY/JUNE 2022



Washington, D.C.
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for History Lovers

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About the cover:

The Thomas Jefferson Memorial, located on the National Mall.

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From the President General

Greetings from 1776 D Street in our nation's capital! I am immensely honored to have served as the 45th President General of our National Society, and I appreciate your support throughout my term in office, which is nearly over. We have so much of which to be proud, and the cloudy skies of the past two years should not overshadow the sunshine we created. I respectfully ask that you remember our administration for its many accomplishments and steady leadership, despite the challenges presented during a difficult time.



While I know you are eager to jump into this issue, please allow me to express my gratitude to our magazine team and to you for your support. I have had the privilege of serving as editor-in-chief of our publications for 15 years (2004–2019) and have occupied our highest office for the past three years, making mine an 18-year commitment to *American Spirit* and the *Daughters* newsletter. During that time, our circulation has nearly doubled, and our content has flourished—as evidenced by multiple consecutive awards for excellence. I am proud that we offer a world-class publication that merits inclusion alongside our world-class library and museum as fitting representations of the reputation of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

I am confident you will enjoy this issue of *American Spirit*! In “Visions of America,” we take you on a tour of Washington, D.C., highlighting historic sites and attractions that we encourage you to visit when you attend this year’s Continental Congress. The overarching theme of Colonial food and drink is sure to be a feast for body and soul. Be sure to savor every page!

You will especially appreciate the “Our Patriots” installment focused on Casimir Pulaski, the Polish military commander who is considered one of two “Fathers of the American Cavalry.” The other is Michael Kováts de Fabricy, who was honored in February by our National Society, an occasion about which you will also read inside. We were delighted to place a bronze marker on an elementary school that bears his name in Karcag, Hungary, and we look forward to placing a companion marker on May 10, near the place where Kováts died in 1779 during the Battle of Charleston.

As the 250th anniversary of our nation’s founding approaches, I hope you will seek out ways like these in your own chapters and communities to recognize the men and women who achieved American independence. Please also honor the example of our Patriot ancestors by supporting the important mission-driven work of the DAR and encouraging other women to join our sisterhood of service.

We have much work to do—work that has never been more important to America’s future. The words of our first Commander in Chief George Washington must echo down to us through the generations to remind us: “The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.”

Thank you for your confidence, your commitment and your service. I remain faithfully yours.

Denise Doring VanBuren



Dear Readers,

For the past six years, first as National Chair of the DAR Magazine Committee (2016–2019) and now as editor-in-chief (2019–2022), I have had the distinct honor of sharing *American Spirit* with you. As a historian, I have loved being able to influence relevant, well-researched and well-written articles about our nation's early years for you. Hopefully they have piqued your interest in further research, been shared with your friends and family, or spoken to you with a personal connection. My utmost thanks to the outstanding DAR Magazine Team of Edith Rianzares, Elizabeth Partridge, LaVonne Chappell and Aubrey Williams, National Chair, DAR Magazine Committee (2019–2022); to Megan Hamby and Taylor Mills at Hammock Inc.; and to you, our loyal readers, for your article suggestions, gentle corrections and enthusiasm for each issue.

Jennifer Minus

Editor-in-Chief, *American Spirit* and *Daughters Newsletter*



MARCH/APRIL 2022

I especially enjoyed the article "Centuries of Care" about our oldest public health and military facilities. As a Naval Nurse Corps Officer, I was stationed at NMC Portsmouth, "The First and Finest," in Building I, the oldest section. Then during Desert Shield/Storm, I was Division Officer on 12C, where the POWs received care after their release. Plaques were

placed on the doors of their rooms. I worked at NMCP until 2019. There is lots of history in Portsmouth, Va.!

–Carolyn Guenveur
Lynnhaven Parish Chapter
Virginia Beach, Va.

I read the "Founding Mother" article with interest. Ann Robertson Johnson Cockrill is my fourth great-grandmother, and I proudly have a DAR supplement under her name. Although my husband and I have gone through Nashville, Tenn., many times on our way to Florida from our home in South Dakota without stopping, you can be sure the next time we will stop and visit the Nashville City Cemetery and Centennial Park!

–Lavonne Siegfried Anderson
Mary Chilton Chapter
Sioux Falls, S.D.

Thank you for publishing the interesting article about Anne Marbury Hutchinson. Several years ago, I was researching my husband's ancestry, and found that Anne was one of his direct ancestors through her daughter Faith, who married Thomas Savage. I was so fascinated by Anne's courage that I purchased and read the book *Divine Rebel: The Life of Anne Marbury Hutchinson* by Selma R. Williams. Nobody I have mentioned this

to had ever heard of Anne. Now maybe at least a few thousand DAR members will know who she was.

–Carolyn Abell Smith
Ocala Chapter
Ocala, Fla.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2021

The November/December issue of *American Spirit* reached us in time to put yaupon holly tea on our Christmas menu. I understand why it is gaining popularity. Ours was delicious; we all enjoyed it. The article was a delight, as was another excellent one on "While the Men Were Away." What a terrific magazine!

–Gay Davenport
Major Benjamin May Chapter
Farmville, N.C.

I just received my November/December copy of *American Spirit*. I was pleased to see a photograph of the old Custom House in Yorktown, Va., just across the river from Gloucester, where I grew up. My grandfather, Mr. Otto H. Weiss, was a high school teacher and a semiprofessional photographer from about 1920 until he died in 1975. During that time, he made many photos of places in Virginia, including this one of the Yorktown Custom House, which was taken sometime between 1920–1935. When he passed away, I inherited what remained of his old photos. I donated the original pictures to the Alderman Library at the University of Virginia, but kept copies on a memory stick.



–JD Morris

Do you love *American Spirit*? Let us know!
Send us an email at AmericanSpirit@dar.org.

Independence Advocate

Illinois Daughter is passionate about making aging with dignity a reality

Sometimes the best ideas come when you least expect them. That was true for Mary Harroun, who was reminiscing about her son enjoying his baby walker when a lightbulb went off: What if she could take the concept of a baby walker and adapt it into a wheelchair alternative for adults?

As a geriatric recreational therapist and former nursing home administrator, Ms. Harroun saw firsthand how restrictive wheelchairs were for elderly residents who are not allowed to walk on their own. Wheelchairs offer limited independence for users, but also lead to muscle atrophy and pressure sores. Traditional walkers work best for those who just need a little bit of help getting around.

Enter the Merry Walker, the framed tubular steel ambulation device that Ms. Harroun invented after her lightbulb moment. Unlike a traditional, forward-pushing walker, the Merry Walker offers support all around the user—not just in front of them. A gate in the front allows for easy use, while a weighted bottom makes it more tip-resistant. There's also a padded seat in the rear, as opposed to the front, for an easier transition from standing to sitting.

Ms. Harroun was awarded two U.S. patents for the device and has since fended off countless copycats, invented and manufactured other assistive devices, and published four books, all in the name of promoting quality of life and decreasing “learned dependency” among the elderly.

Her advocate mentality has been a mainstay throughout her career. Even as a volunteer music therapist, she routinely pushed the bounds of typical care. “The director of volunteers told me that if the administrator had been aware of the music therapy I was providing to the residents, she might have been fired,” said the member of North Shore Chapter, Lake Forest, Ill. “But that makes no sense, because I was bringing laughter and memory back to the residents.”

Later, as a director of recreation, she continued to delight residents with a full roster of fun and meaningful daily activities. They went apple picking. They baked apple pies. They went camping, to the circus and to baseball games.

“As long as it's safe and set up for their needs, why not?” she said. “I didn't treat them as elderly. I treated them as people. And so many of them are not treated that way.”



“I discourage people my age and older from living in assisted living facilities because of the learned dependency that follows. They learn to become dependent on staff for their basic needs, and it doesn't have to be that way.”

Ms. Harroun's latest project is a workbook for adult children to use with their parents to assist them with aging in place, which is another topic she's passionate about.

“I discourage people my age and older from living in assisted living facilities because of the learned dependency that follows,” she said. “They learn to become dependent on staff for their basic needs, and it doesn't have to be that way.”

Ms. Harroun and her husband, Warren Young, have gone through the workbook process in their own home, and when the time comes, they'll be ready to age in place, too.

“It involved a lot of decluttering,” she said. “We realized it's important to have one of what you need, but it's a problem if you have seven of them.”

Ms. Harroun writes her books in the winter, “because in all the other seasons I'm too busy with my garden,” she said.

Her lakeside property is landscaped primarily with native wildflowers. As the Conservation Committee Chair of the North Shore Chapter, Ms. Harroun has enjoyed learning about the variety of indigenous plants and the purpose they served to the area American Indian tribes. “My chapter will come here in the summer, and we'll walk through the garden and talk about how all the plants were used,” she said. “I'm also hoping to be able to play my Native American flute, but I'll need to get a lot better at it first. I have a background in music and can play several instruments, but this one is proving to be very different.”

A HERO'S JOURNEY



Mike Duncan's wonderful new biography of the Marquis de Lafayette, *Hero of Two Worlds: The Marquis de Lafayette in the Age of Revolution* (Hachette, 2021), details the tumultuous life of one of our most beloved Patriots, whose lifelong quest to establish liberty on two continents nearly cost him his life during the French Revolution.

Lafayette, born Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier on September 6, 1757, had a difficult childhood and youth. Shortly before his second birthday, his father died, making him the Marquis de La Fayette. After living with his grandmother on his country estate until the age of 10, he joined his mother in Paris until her death when he was 12. This led to his stay with the de Noailles family and engagement to their daughter Adrienne.

He was an outsider in Parisian high society, clumsy at niceties such as dancing and witty chatter. However, as the sole heir of both his mother's and father's extended family, he became one of the wealthiest nobles in France at the age of 12.

The de Noailles family helped Lafayette join the French Army, and he trained with their family regiment in Metz for two years. His hopes for advancement and a career were dashed when Louis XVI reformed the army to cull officers who appeared to be promoted based more on their bloodlines than demonstrated merit.

Lafayette's life changed in late 1776 in Paris when he met American envoy Silas Deane, who gave him a commission as major general in the fledgling Continental Army. Duncan relates how Lafayette's departure was fraught with misadventures, as both his in-laws and the king tried unsuccessfully to stop him.

Duncan also explores Lafayette's relationship with George Washington, which has often been described as that of a father-and-son relationship. Duncan describes Lafayette as ebullient and earnest, bedazzled by his proximity to Washington and possible glory in the war for liberty. He endeared himself to much of the Patriot officer corps and to his men, using his wealth to bring them comforts. Lafayette also became an ardent abolitionist, and he repeatedly urged his slaveholding friends to find a way to free their slaves.

In 1779, Lafayette made a brief visit home to placate his king and request more help for the American cause, then returned to the Continental Army. After playing a key role at Yorktown, he returned to France and was idolized and celebrated as the "Hero of Two Worlds." He would soon learn the precarious nature of heroism.

The France that Lafayette returned to bubbled with discontent over the *ancien régime's* vast social inequities and absolutism. Lafayette plunged into social and political reform, boldly speaking out—even to the king. Citing letters from American colleagues such as Thomas Jefferson and financier Robert Morris, Duncan writes that Lafayette's enthusiasm and open character made him both endearing and naïve. His trusting nature and forthrightness were heroic, while they also ensured his downfall.

From 1786 until he fled France on August 19, 1792, Lafayette attempted to prevent chaos and steer France between reaction and revolution. He barely escaped execution by revolutionaries who saw him as a traitor. He left France only to be immediately imprisoned for nearly five years by Austrians, who considered him a dangerous revolutionary.

Freed in 1797, he returned to France and continued to struggle for liberty during Napoleon's reign and then under the restored Bourbon monarchy. He even joined a badly planned plot to overthrow the Bourbons that ended without his being seriously implicated. Remaining a staunch abolitionist, he reproached Napoleon for reinstituting slavery.

In 1824, he accepted an invitation to visit America, where adoring crowds greeted him everywhere—even in the South, where he urged the abolition of slavery. During 18 months in America, he visited every state and reunited with hundreds of former comrades. When he returned to France, he continued to call for political reform until his death on May 20, 1834.

Though she occupies a far smaller role, Lafayette's wife, Adrienne, also emerges as a hero. Her husband left her to manage alone on multiple occasions. She feared for his safety as France spun into violence. When he was imprisoned, she worked desperately to free him and, when that failed, got permission to join him in prison.

Duncan's narrative style makes *Hero of Two Worlds* a page-turner, as we follow our hero's journey into and out of perils. The writer and philosopher Joseph Campbell defined a hero as "someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself." Lafayette undoubtedly deserves that title. — Bill Hudgins

Editor's Note: New York Daughters have been marking major points of Lafayette's 1824-1825 journey through the state with the help of Julien Icher. You can follow Icher's journey at thelafayettetrail.org.



A Thirst for Independence

Imagine Jonathan Armstrong, exhausted and victorious after a hard-fought battle during the American Revolution, quenching his thirst with this canteen. Canteens were often made of wood in the 18th century, and the two most common types were the drum and cheesebox styles. Armstrong's canteen, which is 6.25 inches in diameter and 3.75 inches high, was made in the drum style. It is a staved vessel, made by a cooper (a craftsman who builds wooden containers) with specialized tools for constructing watertight vessels without nails. Coopers also made buckets, barrels and other storage containers in this manner. Armstrong's canteen has three iron braces for holding a strap that would have gone around his neck and under his arm. Some canteens were painted and engraved with the owner's name. Others, such as Armstrong's, were plain.

Armstrong, who was born in Connecticut in 1743, carried this canteen with him as he fought in the War of Independence. He served with Vermonters under Captain Daniel Smith's Company, which was part of Colonel Ira Allen's Regiment. Armstrong distinguished himself by capturing the wounded colonel of the Corps of Royalists, Francis J. von Pfister, during the fighting at Hoosick Falls, N.Y., in the Battle of Bennington in August 1777. Pfister had been shot while leading a cavalry troop and died sometime after his capture. —*Carrie Blough* ○

SERVICE TO AMERICA

*Spotlighting DAR Volunteers
Who Give Back to Their
Communities in Meaningful Ways*



Shelly Culea helps care for historic silver collections.

Handled With Care

Shelly Culea, member of the Milwaukee Chapter in Wisconsin, volunteers her time as the custodian of two historic silver collections in downtown Milwaukee. One collection is owned by the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) and is from the early 1900s, and the other is owned by the Woman's Club of Wisconsin and dates to the late 1800s. Ms. Culea has a lifelong interest in three-dimensional art, and she quickly got a job with Kirchner Corporation, a large jewelry manufacturing company in Minneapolis, Minn., after graduating from college. She later worked as a jewelry designer for Jewelmont.

In 2009, after learning about the Emil Kronquist Silver Collection, which had been missing for 22 years, Ms. Culea visited the MATC president's office to inquire about the collection. Upon introducing herself to the president's secretary, she learned that the collection wasn't missing at all—it was hidden. Because the president's position changed so often, the secretary had trusted only herself to safeguard the collection, which she hid in the private bathroom within the president of the college's office, stored behind stacks of towels in the linen closet.

"The story is important for many reasons, one of which is a universal problem of how small, culturally important collections can be stolen or lost from small institutions such as schools, universities and historic

societies," Ms. Culea said. Pieces often disappear when there is no custodian or oversight committee caring for a collection.

The Kronquist Collection is composed of Emil Kronquist's beautiful hand-wrought metal objects: fine jewelry, vases, bowls, sculpture and a chalice. The collection also includes hand-wrought sterling pieces

from the famous Danish silversmith Georg Jensen, under whom Kronquist apprenticed before coming to America in 1904. Ms. Culea knows the history of each piece in the collection.

Upon discovering the collection, she spent five months cleaning and polishing it. Now, she inspects and dusts the entire Kronquist Collection once a year, wearing 100% white cotton gloves when touching the pieces. Ms. Culea explained that oil from a person's hands leaves fingerprints, which tarnish the surface, so it is important to protect the silver from her skin. She polishes the silver collection every three years (or as needed) and uses her years of experience and judgment to decide whether a piece is tarnished between polishings.

In 2020, Ms. Culea joined the Historic Building Committee of the Woman's Club of Wisconsin. Her metal knowledge prompted her to volunteer to inventory and care for the club's silver collection, which includes coffee urns, charming coffee and tea pots, elegant trays, and bowls. Most of these silver pieces were manufactured in the United States between 1880 and 1910; most were gifts to the club from Woman's Club members' private collections.

Ms. Culea gave a lecture and training class about the collection to the Woman's Club kitchen staff members in 2021, and the event was so popular that she was asked to present a similar lecture to the club's membership on the history of the collection and how to care for silver. In January 2022, she gave a lecture to her DAR chapter titled "The Hidden Silver Treasure of Emil Kronquist," and she has two more "Silver Treasure" lectures scheduled in Milwaukee this spring. ☉

Silver Tips From Shelly Culea

- > Sunlight tarnishes silver, so silver items should be kept out of the sun.
- > Oxygen in the air also tarnishes silver. Smaller pieces of sterling silver, like jewelry, can be kept in a plastic bag inside a dark drawer to avoid tarnish.
- > A hair dryer can be used to remove hardened wax. The wax turns clear and soft as it heats and can be wiped away with a soft cloth.

DAR HISTORIC PRESERVATION GRANTS

*Supporting Worthy Preservation
Projects Nationwide Focused on the
Mission of the DAR*

'No Records, No History' Opening and Preserving Sam's Box

The Bixby Memorial Free Library in Vergennes, Vt., recently preserved historic documents from the Strong family dating to the late 1700s, thanks in part to a DAR Historic Preservation Grant sponsored by the Seth Warner-Rhoda Farrand Chapter, Vergennes, Vt. The library serves the Addison County area and has one of Vermont's most complete collections of local history. This project combined volunteer efforts with conservation expertise and serves as a model for the future conservation of other significant items in the library's collection.

The Strong family was one of the founding families of Addison County. John Strong was a Revolutionary War Patriot who served as a judge, surveyor and state legislator. He also represented Addison County at the state convention that adopted the Constitution of the United States and approved the admission of Vermont to the Union as the 14th state. John's son Samuel served as a brigadier general during the War of 1812. He represented Vergennes in the Vermont House of Representatives, and he served as an assistant judge in Addison County and as mayor of Vergennes.

The Bixby Memorial Free Library has a long-standing relationship with the Seth Warner-Rhoda Farrand Chapter. When

Cornelia Wagstaff, a chapter member and direct descendant of Samuel Strong, died in 1976, her family donated a box of Samuel Strong's personal papers to the library. The box was nicknamed "Sam's Box" and remained untouched until a roof failure in 2007 caused water damage to the room in which it was stored. Some of the documents in Sam's Box were also affected and in need of conservation.

"It's really simple, isn't it? No records, no history," said Maureen Labenski, who wrote the grant application. "Ink fades, paper disintegrates, stains obliterate words, handling produces tears—and

pages that includes an epic poem related to the French and Indian War, a large hand-drawn map showing plots belonging to the Strong family, a 1795 envelope and deed to the land for Samuel's home, and a promissory note signed by Samuel Strong.

The Bixby Memorial Free Library contracted Barbis Fine Art Conservation in Woodstock, Vt., for the conservation work, which included cleaning surface soils and removing stains; deacidifying paper and restoring it to a natural pH; relaxing folds and creases; filling holes and tears with Japanese rice tissue; and enclosing the documents in a special envelope for safe handling. The library exhibited the papers in summer 2021, and they are now available for research and educational purposes. ○

Editor's note: The Vermont State Society has owned the John Strong Mansion in Addison, Vt., and operated it as a museum since 1935. You can read more about this historic house in the November/December 2002 issue of *American Spirit*.



Left to right: Maureen Labenski, Joy Minns, Rena Trepanier, Susan Ferland

just like that these unique and important guides to the history of Vergennes and the Champlain Valley could be lost to history."

Four DAR members—Joy Minns, Rena Trepanier and Susan Ferland from the Seth Warner-Rhoda Farrand Chapter and Maureen Labenski from the Green Mountain Chapter in Burlington, Vt.—volunteered to assess each item from Sam's Box and rate it on a scale developed by a paper conservator according to condition, historical significance and priority for conservation. They determined that four items had enough historical or cultural significance and were in good enough condition to justify conservation: a handwritten folio of four

What Else Was in Sam's Box?

The box contains documents related to the Strong family and the early history of the Vergennes area. They include:

- A leatherbound journal written by Mary Tucker, the first librarian in Vergennes. It is in poor condition and beyond conservation, but readable by a dedicated researcher
- A ledger from 1860-1864, showing accounts for school and algebra grades for students
- More than 50 documents related to Samuel Strong's tenure as justice of the peace

What Makes a House Historic?

An analysis of North Carolina's oldest homes illustrates the challenge for historians

The study of Colonial American history, and American memory, is full of superlatives. History books and pamphlets are littered with firsts, largests and oldests. One of the more popular of these is the idea of the "oldest house," the structure in a state or colony that was built before the rest. In some ways, the idea is problematic for 21st-century historians. There is nothing absolute about the homes claiming that title, whether in the United States or elsewhere. No "oldest house" was the first house in a state or territory; that structure has long since rotted away. Even the term house is fraught with difficulty. It often refers to European-style dwellings that ignore the centuries of occupation by American Indians, whose homes are never recognized in the same way as those built by Puritans or Germanic immigrants.

And yet, the term "oldest house" still holds sway over many Americans. Every state has a house designated as the oldest. Many of them are venerated. The oldest house in Connecticut, the Henry Whitfield House (1639), has been a popular museum for more than 100 years, while the De Vargas Street House (New Mexico, 1600s) and the Wyckoff House (New York, ca. 1652) are also landmarks and museums. The story of North Carolina's oldest house is unique from these. That state has a surprisingly new contender for the position, and the debate about its oldest homes shows that the people living inside the houses are sometimes more noteworthy than the wood, brick and stone that compose them.

The oldest house in North Carolina was once believed to be the Newbold-White House in Hertford. The house was thought to have been built by Abraham Sanders around 1730. In 1973, Tom Parramore analyzed court and deed records and boldly declared that the house was much older, dating to the 1670s or earlier. He looked at the many men and women, including Sanders, who owned the land in the early

Newbold-White House



18th century. Parramore believed that none of them would have had the capital or interest to build the house. Instead, he attributed construction to Joseph Scott, a planter who had lived in the area since the 1660s.

In addition to its early building date, the house also had an intriguing story. It was one of the few surviving structures from North Carolina's first five decades of existence, a period when a cast of interesting characters established a new colony and feuded with one another. The house was thought to have been visited by George Fox, the founder of Quakerism. One of the early owners of the plantation was Thomas Blount, a Blount family descendant who influenced North Carolina and Tennessee politics for centuries. This period is a romantic one to many North Carolinians, akin to Jamestown for Virginians or the Puritans for New Englanders.

Despite the potential role of the Newbold-White House in early North Carolina history, there is no physical evidence it existed prior to 1730. In the mid-20th century, public interest in the state's oldest house shifted to Sloop Point, a house

on Virginia Creek 20 miles north of Wilmington. Sloop Point, most likely built in 1728, is an attractive house with a wide, sloping roof and an ornate mantel. It resembles many Colonial homes in Charleston and Barbados and points to the state's connections with the Caribbean. But, as with the Newbold-White House, the people associated with Sloop Point are more interesting than the architecture. John Ashe, one of the revolutionary founders of the state of North Carolina, inherited the house from his father, Colonial leader John Baptista Ashe. Another owner was Samuel Swann, a longtime power broker, speaker of the Colonial assembly and namesake of the town of Swansboro.

A third contender for oldest house was the Hammock House in the seaside town of Beaufort. Some sources argue that it was constructed in the early 1700s. There are even stories that the pirate Blackbeard once lived there, although those and the early date of construction cannot be verified. The house has a Bahamian-style porch like Sloop Point and is larger. But the house remains only locally prominent, and most historians believe



Hammock House

it was constructed much later in the 18th century. Despite local and tourist interest, there is even less evidence of the Hammock House's pre-1730 construction than for the Newbold-White House.

Sloop Point, a private home, and the Newbold-White House, a

government-owned structure, jointly held the title of oldest house until 2013. Around that time, a chance discovery upended more than a century of knowledge and research about old Tar Heel



Lane House

homes. Steve and Linda Lane, a couple who had just purchased a rental home in the historic district of Edenton, began renovating the house and discovered a set of old beams. They alerted experts

who used dendrochronology (the use of tree rings to date wood) and revealed that the house was originally built around 1719. This discovery made the house the undisputed oldest surviving home in North Carolina.

It is difficult for historians and the public to show as much excitement about the Lane House as they did about earlier claims to the state's oldest home. Those older houses represent one facet or another of North Carolina history, but the Lane House is, in many ways, just a house. It is unquestionably old, but it has no provenance behind its legacy. The house looks nothing like it did in the 18th century. It has the look of a mill house, clad in cheap siding instead of antique brick. There are metal gutters, a rusting tin roof and non-antique

continued on page 12

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'Most Faithful Unto Death'

Proud Hungarian Michael Kováts died fighting for American freedom

A Hungarian nobleman who gave his life for the cause of American independence is being commemorated in both countries this year.

DAR is participating in ceremonies honoring Michael Kováts de Fabricy, who shares the title "Father of the American Cavalry" with Polish-born Revolutionary War hero Casimir Pulaski. (See our profile of Pulaski on

page 46 of this issue of *American Spirit*.)

Kováts, born in Karcag, Hungary, in 1724, distinguished himself in Maria Theresa's Austro-Hungarian army, serving as an officer in the esteemed Hungarian light cavalry known as the hussars. He later led cavalry under Frederick the Great in the Prussian Army and also lent his support to Polish freedom fighters.

As the American Revolution unfolded, Kováts sailed for the Colonies, determined to help the Patriot cause. In 1777, he wrote to Benjamin Franklin, declaring himself "a free man and a Hungarian" and establishing his military credentials, presenting his case:

"The dangers and the bloodshed of a great many campaigns taught me how to mold a soldier, and ... how to arm him and let him defend the dearest of the lands with his best ability under any conditions and developments of the war.

"I am willing to sacrifice myself wholly and faithfully as it is expected of an honest soldier facing the hazards and great dangers of the war."

After requesting a letter of recommendation to Congress, Kováts signed



off, declaring himself "most faithful unto death."

Despite George Washington's wariness of foreign aristocrats, Pulaski, who was commanding Washington's ill-trained cavalry,

recommended Kováts for the training of a unit of hussars. The Continental Congress commissioned Pulaski's Legion on March 28, 1778, and by that October the legion was fighting the British at Osborn Island and Egg Harbor, N.J.

In February 1779, Pulaski's Legion began the long march to South Carolina to help defend the besieged Charleston. On May 11, 1779, Kováts died in combat and was buried where he fell.

On February 22, 2022, a small DAR delegation placed a permanent bronze marker at Kováts' hometown of Karcag, Hungary. On May 10, an identical campaign plaque will be dedicated in Charleston, S.C., near the site of his death, with a wreath to be laid a day later at the equestrian statue of Kováts at the Hungarian Embassy in Washington, D.C. ■

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If you are a direct descendant from a colonial militia officer who served during the Revolutionary War, you should consider becoming a member of the SDOCM, a new heritage organization devoted to preserving the history of the militia during the American Revolution, educating the public about the role of the colonial militia, and supporting our modern-day national guard.

Any person aged eighteen years or older is eligible for membership, provided lineal descent is proven from an officer who served in the colonial militia between April 19, 1775 and November 26, 1783. Approved record copies of DAR, CAR or SAR applications are accepted with no further proofs necessary.

All memberships are lifetime memberships.

SDOCM1775-1783.COM

continued from page 11

What Makes a House Historic?

iron beams serving as pillars. This condition has led to a general ignorance of its status throughout the state. It has not become a state historic site or gained its own entry on the National Register of Historic Places.

But the Lane House is slowly beginning to receive its recognition. It was donated to a local preservation organization in 2018, and the town hopes to turn it into a museum one day. Even as the Lane House is being renovated, the

Newbold-White House continues to organize events and market itself as a pivotal part of North Carolina history. The house is open for tours and now bills itself as the oldest brick house in the state. Hopefully one day, after renovation and new attention from the public and government agencies, the Lane House will grow in stature to reach that pinnacle of public history interest in the 21st century as a tourist attraction. ■

In the Galleries



"OUR COMMONWEALTH"

Virginia Museum of History & Culture
Richmond, Va.

virginiahistory.org

In May 2022, the Virginia Museum of History & Culture (VMHC) will reopen after an extensive and transformative renovation. Nearly two-thirds of the 250,000-square-foot building has been renovated, allowing for a two-story entrance atrium, an immersive orientation theater, a research library and more. Along with the grand reopening, the VMHC will introduce "Our Commonwealth," a marquee long-term exhibition that provides an in-depth multisensory exploration through the five major regions of Virginia, featuring stories and artifacts from partner organizations throughout the state.



"FORGING A NATION (1760 TO 1860)"

Tennessee State Museum
Nashville, Tenn.

tnmuseum.org

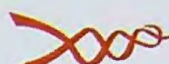
The Tennessee State Museum's permanent exhibit "Forging a Nation" features artifacts, film and images that demonstrate how settlers moved into the land

that eventually became Tennessee, and how Southeastern American Indians resisted. It also explores the lives of Tennessee leaders who shaped the young country, such as Andrew Jackson, James

K. Polk, David Crockett and Sam Houston.

Included in the exhibit is a rare 13-star United States flag. The hat that Jackson wore at his 1829 presidential inauguration is also on display. ■

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The Forecast Calls For ... Weather



On July 4, 1776, as Revolutionary fervor mounted inside Independence Hall, the temperature at 1 p.m. in Philadelphia was an unseasonably balmy (and apt) 76 degrees. So recorded Thomas Jefferson, who was not too busy with the Declaration of Independence to indulge his fascination with weather.

Jefferson was “one of the first systematic observers of the American climate,” according to the Monticello website, and the thermometer he bought that eventful July 4 was just one of nearly 20 his memos record him purchasing. His “meteorological diary,” started three days earlier, became a daily routine, with dawn and late afternoon temperature readings. He sometimes included barometric and other data as well as observations on flora and fauna.

Jefferson was hardly the only weather-obsessed Founding Father. Benjamin Franklin’s electrifying explorations are well-documented (see the July/August 2021 issue of *American Spirit* for a look at Franklin the storm chaser). George Washington was recording weather entries in his diary a day before his own weather-related death.

The birth of synoptic weather forecasting—“based on the compilation and analysis of many observations

taken simultaneously over a wide area,” as defined by the NASA Earth Observatory—did not occur until the 1860s. But Jefferson much earlier “envisioned a national network of weather watchers” providing a sweeping range of climate indexes that would help form reliable theories, the Monticello website explains.

In “The Puzzle of the American Climate in the Early Colonial Period,” published in *The American Historical Review*, vol. 87, no. 5 (Oxford University Press, American Historical Association, 1982), Karen Ordahl Kupperman describes a widespread English assumption that climate was constant across any latitude. That misconception fed unrealistic expectations about the commodities that the Colonies would be able to produce. Even as Colonists began to compile firsthand observations of weather patterns, they held to contradictory but conventional notions. As Kupperman writes, the “mental

adjustment ... was both slow and costly in money as well as lives.”

By Colonial times, measuring and recording climatological data had been steadily improving through instruments such as the hygrometer, invented in the mid-15th century for measuring air humidity; the thermometer, developed via a series of breakthroughs in the 16th and 17th centuries but revolutionized by Dutch physicist Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit in the early 18th century; and the barometer, invented by Italian physicist Evangelista Torricelli for measuring air pressure.

Massachusetts Bay Colony leader John Winthrop’s 19-year collection of weather data from 1630 to 1649 set the stage for detailed analysis of weather patterns in Massachusetts, Kupperman writes. The almanac was an early tool in English weather prediction long before William Pierce published a version for New England in 1639. Nathaniel Ames of Massachusetts published an influential almanac from 1726 to 1775, while Franklin’s first one did not arrive until 1732.

Subsequent breakthroughs include British admiral Frances Beaufort’s development of a scale for estimating wind strengths without instruments in 1805. Robert FitzRoy, a Beaufort protégé hired to accompany famed naturalist Charles Darwin on his worldwide voyage in 1831, made multiple contributions, including the establishment of a system of storm warnings, the creation of standardized meteorological equipment and the publication of what many consider to be the first public weather forecast.

Joseph Henry, first secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, became known as the “Father of Weather Forecasting” for his efforts, launched in 1849, to establish an extensive weather observation network. Under Henry’s plan, the Smithsonian created weather maps from data submitted by telegraph companies. ■

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And do what makes you happy,
It will set your spirit free!*

*Always seek the truth,
Be honest and be kind.
Savor every single moment,
Every treasure that you find.*

*Take the time to know yourself,
Keep your dreams in sight.
The world is waiting there for you,
Just make sure to share your light.*

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What's in a Name

Discover the meaning behind some of the DAR chapters' unique names.

Martha Devotion Huntington Chapter, Bay Village, Ohio, was confirmed on October 10, 1940. It was named to honor Martha Devotion, oldest daughter of the Reverend Ebenezer Devotion and Martha Lathrop Devotion. In 1761, she married Samuel Huntington (1731–1796) of Norwich, Ct., who became a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Governor of Connecticut and, in 1779, President of the Continental Congress. On March 1, 1781, during Samuel's term as President of the Continental Congress, the Articles of Confederation became operative as the first Constitution of the United States. The first section of the Articles of Confederation designates the nation as the United States for the first time. Some argue that this makes Samuel Huntington the first president of the United States. In 2015, he was officially recognized as the First President of the United States in Congress Assembled. The action was taken by the National Archives, the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress, making Martha Devotion Huntington the first First Lady of the United States in Congress Assembled.

The Hannah Cole Chapter, Boonville, Mo., was organized in 1906 with the name Jemima Alexander Sharpe Chapter after the Revolutionary War ancestor of the Organizing Regent. In 1916, the name was changed to the Cooper County Chapter. In 1932, the chapter finally settled on the Hannah Cole Chapter in honor of Hannah Allison Cole, one of the first pioneer



Philip and Catherine Schuyler resided at this estate in Saratoga, N.Y.

women to settle in Cooper County. Hannah, daughter of a Revolutionary War veteran, was a widow with nine children when she settled in Boonville. In 1814, after an uptick in attacks from American Indians, Hannah's neighbors built a fort around her cabin, choosing it because of its location on the river bluffs and access to fresh water. It became known as "Cole's Fort," and other settlers soon began to build their homes in and around the fort. The first school in the region began at Cole's Fort, and the first court was also convened there. Hannah sold her property to St. Louis real estate developers, but later sued the developers saying they had not paid her a fair price for the land. The judge agreed the price was not fair, but the real estate agents produced a document with her signature, and her lawsuit failed.

Catherine Schuyler Chapter, Belmont, N.Y., organized June 12, 1897, is named for Catherine Schuyler, a Patriot in her own right, who burned the fields of her

family's Saratoga, N.Y., estate before the pivotal Battle of Saratoga to prevent the British, commanded by General John Burgoyne, from reaping the bounty.

Gen. Burgoyne ordered the destruction of the Schuyler farm at Saratoga, stating that this was a strategic military decision and not a retaliation for Catherine's action, as was suspected. Even so, as protocol dictated, Catherine and her husband, General Philip Schuyler, subsequently entertained Gen. Burgoyne and his upper-echelon officers at their home in Albany, N.Y.

Judge Philip Church—son of the Schuylers' first daughter, Angelica, and John Barker Church—having served as aide-de-camp to his uncle Alexander Hamilton, settled a 2,000-acre tract in the (Robert) Morris Reserve with his wife, Ann Matilda, daughter of General Walter Stewart, in what is now Allegany County, N.Y.

Their granddaughter, Angelica Church Hart, and grand-niece, Mary Church Gilpin, Catherine Schuyler's descendants, were founding chapter members. ■



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Ellicott City Turns 250

The Hardworking History of a Maryland Mill Town By Courtney Peter

★ About 13 miles west of Baltimore, the falls of the Patapsco River unleash a tumbling torrent that attracted the attention of three Quaker brothers 250 years ago. Together the racing waters and the brothers' vision transformed the Maryland mill town of Ellicott City into the birthplace of America's Industrial Revolution. Cycles of growth and recovery fueled by railroad tracks and trolley lines, floods and fires formed the historical strata of the town, layered atop its industrial bedrock like the picturesque homes and buildings stacked upon its slopes.

INDUSTRY LEADER

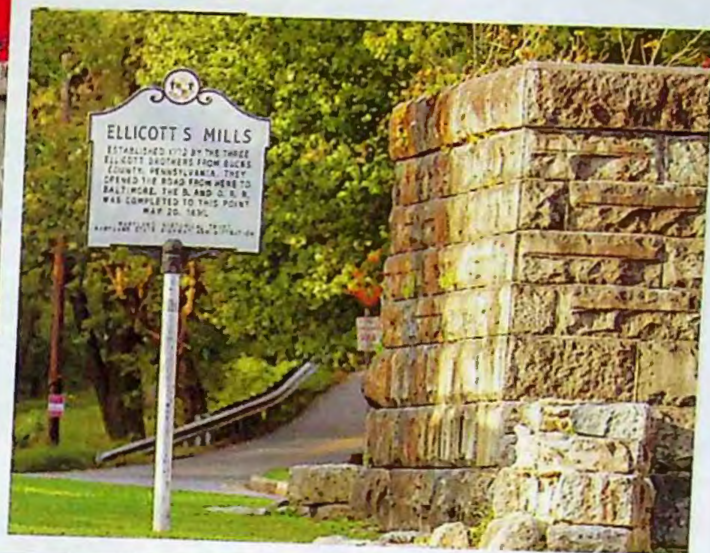
In the early 1770s, the search for a suitable flour mill site brought Joseph, Andrew and John Ellicott of Bucks County, Pa., to a granite-sided hollow in central Maryland's Patapsco River Valley, where four river branches feed into the eponymous flow on its way to Baltimore Harbor. Between these two points lay the potential to power a plethora of industries.

After buying land alongside Patapsco Falls in 1772, the Ellicott brothers built a road and a bridge, followed by a storehouse, blacksmith shop and stable—founding the town originally known as Ellicott's Mills. By the winter of 1774–1775, the Patapsco Flour Mill was in operation, a three-story, 10,000-square-foot manifestation of the



"The situation of this place, serried around the mountains, is romantic. The water there is clear, the rocks there high and majestic, the trees noble ..."

—observations of Ellicott City by François Alexandre Frederic, Duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, author of *Travels Through the United States of North America* (1799)



A historical marker references Ellicott City's beginnings and its railroad history.

EVOLVING IDENTITY

A second economic engine arrived on May 22, 1830, when the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's first 13-mile stretch of track reached its terminus at Ellicott's Mills. Horses pulled the earliest railcars until steam power replaced them the next year. In 1830 alone, 80,000 passengers rode between Baltimore and Ellicott's Mills.

The increased traffic prompted a rise in population, as railroad workers moved in and wealthy urbanites bought summer homes in the hills. When Howard County was created on July 4, 1851, Ellicott's Mills became its seat. In 1867, the town received a city charter and changed its name to Ellicott City.

brothers' business strategy: Build larger than initially necessary to accommodate growth more easily. About the same time, grain began overtaking tobacco as the region's primary export—and the Ellicotts were poised to capitalize.

By the mid-1790s, the company controlled 1,300 acres through ownership or lease. The international flour trade fostered urbanization by creating a local network of growers, processors, shippers, millers, craftspeople and merchants. "Each of these people could profit individually and invest locally ... the scale of their combined investment provided a tremendous impetus for development at major ports and in the villages centered on the mills," Henry K. Sharp writes in *America's First Factory Town: The*

Industrial Revolution in Maryland's Patapsco River Valley (Chesapeake Book Company, 2017).

Ellicott's Mills flourished as a pioneer of the factory town format. The merchant mill, its attendant buildings and the founders' stone homes anchored the east end, while churches and schools occupied elevated ground to the west. Main Street stretched in between. By 1825, the 300 residents were at the center of a Patapsco population boom. "In total, 1,200 individuals populated a multiplicity of large-scale mills and villages, joined by the river and the river road to the first national turnpike west, the national highway of commerce," Sharp writes.



This historic Merryman Street log cabin now on Main Street is believed to have been built circa 1780 by an early Ellicott's Mills settler.



Periodically, the waterway responsible for the town's existence threatened to wash it away. In 250 years, Ellicott City has experienced 17 major floods, including the Great Flood of Maryland in 1868, which produced a 21.5-foot wall of water and caused more than three dozen casualties; the aftermath of Hurricane Agnes in 1972, which left Main Street 14 feet underwater; and most recently in 2018, after 8 inches of rain fell in two hours. An ongoing exhibit at the Museum of Howard County History chronicles the devastating effects.

Ellicott City rebounded after each setback with the historic district as its steadfast anchor. In the post-industrial era, the Old World ambience of the sheer slopes and inviting alleyways surrounding one of Maryland's oldest Main Streets has become the town's star attraction. A day tripper or weekend visitor roaming the museums, historic sites, antique stores, specialty shops, restaurants, breweries and distilleries clustered in the historic district is more likely to tire of the charm than to run out of things to do. ○

JOIN THE FESTIVITIES

Ellicott City's sestercentennial inspired the creation of EC250, a nonprofit organization dedicated to celebrating a quarter-millennium of history. New yearlong exhibits

at the Howard County Welcome Center and the Museum of Howard County History explore the city's evolution from mill town to city and the legacy of the town's founding family based upon artifacts they left behind. The Ellicott Mills Children's Museum opened in April. On June 25, Manor Hill Farm will host an EC250 weekend featuring reenactors, activities and the release of a commemorative sestercentennial beer can.

The second half of the year includes: a reunion of the Fells Lane Community, where descendants of people enslaved on nearby farms once lived; a discussion with descendants of the Miami Nation about the tribe's connection to local Quaker groups; and the debut of the original musical "On National Road." By the time the festivities wrap, 2022 will surely qualify as an era unto itself.

Details are available at ec250.com. To get more information, go to visitoldellicottcity.com and visithowardcounty.com.



ESSENTIAL ELLICOTT CITY

Among this thriving small town's host of historic attractions, these three are unmissable.

Baltimore & Ohio Ellicott City Station Museum

facebook.com/ecborail

Museum visitors have replaced train travelers as patrons of the oldest surviving railroad depot in the nation, which since 1830 has been perched above the Patapsco River opposite the site of the first flour mill built by the Ellicott family. Closed to passengers since 1949 and freight traffic since 1972, the station now shares local railroad history through exhibits including a 1927 caboose, a replica of the first horse-drawn passenger rail car and a 40-foot model train layout depicting the B&O's original 13-mile track.

Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum

friendsofbenjaminbanneker.com

The 142-acre Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum, a living tribute to the first African-American man of science, occupies the very land he once farmed. Banneker, a self-educated astronomer, mathematician, surveyor, author and abolitionist, befriended the Ellicotts, who lent him astronomy books and tools and invited him to help survey Washington, D.C. Trails wind through the site, which includes a Colonial log cabin, a restored 19th-century farmhouse, gardens and an orchard. On June 11 and 12, the annual Colonial Market Fair brings the 18th century back to life with reenactors, artisans, music and children's activities.

Patapsco Female Institute

howardcountymd.gov/historicsites

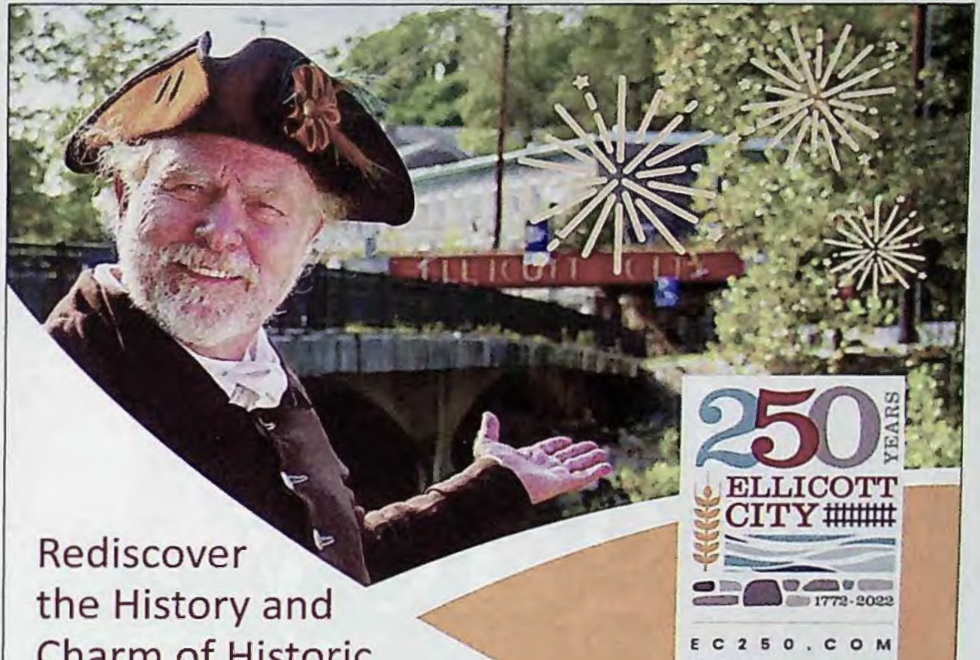
Towering over Ellicott City stand the ruins of a grand Greek Revival building dedicated to educating an unlikely audience of 19th-century young women. From 1837 to 1891, the Patapsco Female

Institute taught botany, chemistry, math and other disciplines then commonly closed to women. Today the stabilized and restored open-air site hosts tours, educational programs and special events.

Chesapeake Theater Company will stage Shakespeare Under the Stars amid the ruins from June 17 to July 24. This

year's show is *Much Ado About Nothing*. As part of the city's sescentennial celebration, the Mary Jerdone Coleman Garden, based on flower pressings from a student's journal, will be unveiled June 4. The interpretive feature also highlights principal Almira Hart Lincoln Phelps, a renowned botanist, writer and lecturer.

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Rediscover the History and Charm of Historic **ELLICOTT CITY,** Maryland

In 1772 the Ellicott Brothers arrived in the Patapsco River Valley to settle "in the hollow" and build what would become the preeminent town along the river that fostered our nation's industrial revolution! Their "can-do" pioneering spirit built the foundation of one of America's most resilient towns.

Plan a visit to celebrate **Ellicott City's 250th anniversary** this year-- walk its streets, sample its restaurants and explore the shops.

Learn more about the town's history at the "Mill Town to City" and "Ellicott Legacy" exhibits.

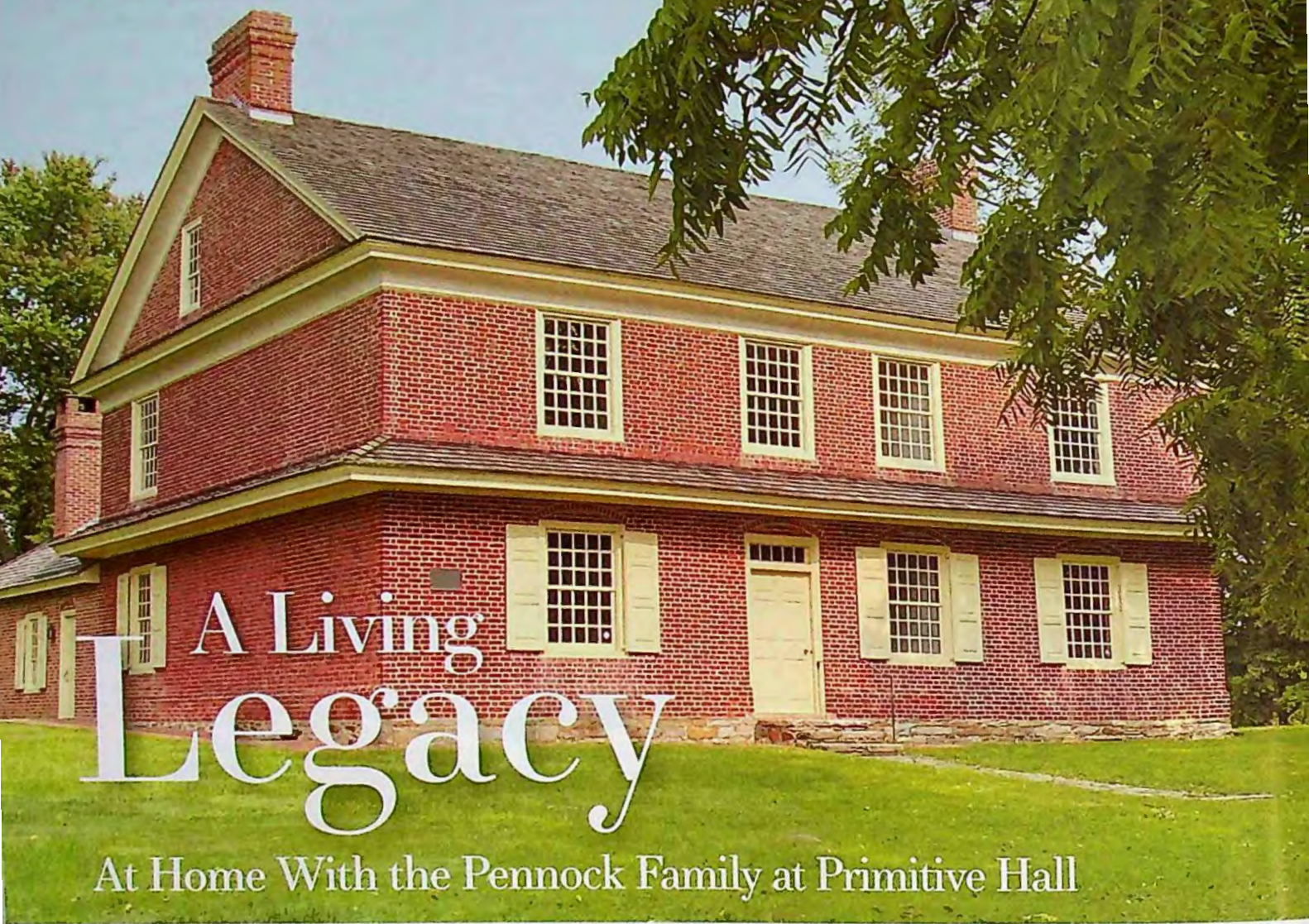
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By Elizabeth Mariano Mubarek

Primitive Hall in rural West Grove, Pa., part of Chester County's West Marlborough Township, stands much as it did when it was first constructed nearly three centuries ago in 1738. Though it has experienced various transformations throughout its existence, efforts have been made in recent years to restore the house to how it looked when it was the lively home of Joseph and Mary Pennock.

A Civic-Minded Family

Joseph Pennock was born in Ireland in 1677. In 1684, he traveled across the Atlantic Ocean with his parents and siblings. However, his mother disliked the Colonies, prompting her to return

with Joseph to Ireland in 1686. In 1698, Joseph's maternal grandfather, English Quaker George Collet, died, leaving Joseph several thousand acres of land in Pennsylvania. This inheritance brought him back to the Colonies when he was in his early 20s.

While in Pennsylvania, Joseph met his bride, Mary Levis, the 20-year-old daughter of immigrants from Leicestershire, England. The two married in 1705 and went on to have 11 children together. Though the couple may have resided on their Chester County property as early as 1710, their large brick residence at Primitive Hall was not constructed until 1738, when Joseph was 61 years old and their children were grown.

Joseph led an active civic life in Pennsylvania. In 1716, he was chosen to

represent the county in the Pennsylvania Assembly, a position he was reelected to many times. He also served as a justice of the peace and was well respected in the area. Unlike his wife, he was not a Quaker by birth, but he began attending the New Garden Friends Meeting, where he became a converted Quaker. Joseph then became one of the founding members of the London Grove Friends Meeting, which remains active today. He is also remembered for befriending members of local American Indian tribes, who were known to sleep in Primitive Hall's oversized entryway.

Restoring Primitive Hall

Primitive Hall was an enormous home for its time, with a massive brick façade, an incredibly wide staircase, a

The home's windows make the house remarkable—many of the large windows contain 30 panes of glass in double sashes of 15 panes each.

significant number of sizable windows and exceptionally high ceilings. Four three-story quadrants of the home are connected by a large, brick center hall. Each quadrant features a large corner fireplace. At the north end of the hall, a closed-string staircase rises to the attic. The stairway balusters are ornate from the first floor to the attic's landing, but are plain and flat from the landing to the attic. The home's windows make the house remarkable—many of the large windows contain 30 panes of glass in double sashes of 15 panes each.

The name Primitive Hall first appeared around 1846 in a family tree completed by Mrs. Casper W. Pennock, though the name may have been in use for decades before this recording.

According to the Primitive Hall Foundation, "Primitive Hall was an ambitious project and there is reason to believe that it required a number of years to finish. There is evidence in one bedroom that the woodwork (mantelpiece and chair rail) never was completed."

Stewart Huston, a Pennock descendant, purchased Primitive Hall in early 1920. He realized that the home was a historic architectural treasure that needed to be preserved and was willing to invest resources into the project. Huston launched what has since been an ongoing process of restoring Primitive Hall to its original state and maintaining its historic value.

Between 1920 and 1970, significant work was done to restore the exterior of the



home, and Huston devoted himself to bringing the Hall back to what it had been in Joseph Pennock's day. He also began the important work of locating and returning original Pennock family furniture to the home—a mission that continues to this day.

In 1960, Huston transferred the property to the Primitive Hall Foundation, effectively making him the last Pennock descendant to reside in the home. This transfer allowed the Board of Trustees to operate under the deed of trust that Huston established, charging the foundation with maintaining the Hall, which it has done faithfully ever since.

Interior restoration work began in January 1973, and it successfully preserved the home's original structure and woodwork, replaced sections of wainscoting, renewed worn floorboards, and

repainted walls in a historically appropriate manner.

Furnishing the Home

The publication of the Winterthur Museum exhibition and accompanying book *Paint, Pattern, and People: The Furniture of Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1725–1850* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015) by Wendy A. Cooper and Lisa Minardi allowed many to learn of Primitive Hall and its exceptional decorative arts for the first time. "Furniture is one of the many vehicles for transporting us into the lives of our ancestors," the book states in its introduction. "It is important for anyone interested in history and the material remains of the past."

Cooper is the curator emerita of furniture at Winterthur Museum and a current member of the advisory board at

Primitive Hall. She has hosted lectures focusing on family heirlooms original to the house that are now on display. These pieces include a solid walnut settle bed and a set of wainscot chairs, both of which were popular among prosperous Quaker families and appeared in the *Paint, Pattern, and People* publication. Other original items on display include a tall clock, a great gate-legged table and a lift-top chest—a piece that has



never left the house and was likely one of the first pieces Joseph and Mary Pennock owned.

While Primitive Hall has not been furnished in excess, the pieces on display have been carefully chosen because they either belonged to the original family or accurately represent locally made, historic furniture that may have been original to the home. As Cooper states in a virtual tour given during the COVID-19 pandemic, "We have tried ... to add a few things to the house, not to over-furnish it, but to make it more Chester County and to put pieces here that Joseph might have had."

'Still a Living Place'

When he died in 1771 at 94 years of age, Joseph Pennock likely had no idea what a vigorous afterlife his estate would have, nor the role Primitive Hall would play in the lives of generations of his descendants. As stated on Primitive Hall's website, "Few buildings anywhere so



Items found within Primitive Hall.

faithfully retain their original character as Primitive Hall—not only the character of brick and mortar, but the sense of 18th-century solitude and strength."

Almost 300 years after the Hall's original construction, Pennock family descendants retain their strong ties to the house. Three of the home's current advisory board members are direct Pennock descendants who maintain relationships with many others. In the early 20th century, a Pennock Family Reunion was held



annually at Primitive Hall. Beginning in 2012, the tradition was revived, with a reunion scheduled every five years. In 2017, about 150 descendants gathered at the Hall to connect with relatives and swap bits of family history. The next reunion is scheduled for 2022 (though it is expected to be postponed because of the ongoing pandemic).

One Pennock descendant, Wendy Walker, currently serves as both the treasurer and a tour guide at the Hall. Walker first moved to the area 30 years ago, and she immediately felt at home. When she learned Primitive Hall was just minutes away from where she had settled—and that it was where her ancestors lived and thrived—it instantly became part of her life. "I just love having Pennock descendants come to the house," she said regarding her work at the Hall. "They really feel a connection with it. It's not just walking into a sterile house museum. You can really sense it's still a living place." ☺

Primitive Hall tours are by appointment only. To arrange one, email Wendy Walker at primitivehalltours@gmail.com. For a virtual tour, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHyVgVPCe6U>

The Chester County DAR Chapter, West Chester, Pa., contributed funds to the building's restoration, which led to the installation of a bronze plaque adhered to the front of Primitive Hall acknowledging the DAR's support in this work.

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A History Lover's
GUIDE TO
Washington,
D.C.



Venture beyond the more familiar landmarks for a deeper dive into our capital's past

By Emily McMackin Dye

Since its founding in 1791, Washington, D.C., has been a city steeped in history. From iconic sights like the White House, Capitol and National Mall to its plethora of monuments, memorials and museums, it's possible to explore the nation's capital for years and still learn more with each trip. If you have already toured the more familiar landmarks, check out these six attractions that draw fewer crowds, but offer a deeper look at the history and character of the D.C. area.

56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence Memorial

Constitution Gardens (between Constitution Avenue NW and the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool)

On the National Mall just east of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, a simple yet poignant memorial pays tribute to the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence, risking their lives to openly declare rebellion against the world's most powerful empire at the time. The memorial is part of Constitution Gardens, a 50-acre park built to commemorate the 1976 U.S. bicentennial.

Two semicircles of granite blocks, grouped by state, depict the signatures of the signers in gold leaf script, along with their names, where they lived and their professions. A gift from the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, the memorial was created by sculptor Joseph Brown and dedicated on July 2, 1984. It is located on a small island in Constitution Gardens overlooking a pond and the Washington Monument. Cross a wooden bridge in the gardens to visit the memorial and reflect on the sacrifices of these signers and their courageous vision.





The Octagon House

799 New York Ave. NW (at 18th Street)

Just blocks away from the White House sits one of the first great houses to grace the nation's capital: The Octagon House. Not actually octagonal in shape, the three-story, red brick architectural marvel is more of an irregular hexagon, but its originality is unmistakable and its history is even grander.

The house served as a social mecca for leading luminaries in the newly established capital city and as a temporary presidential residence after British troops burned the White House during the War of 1812. The Octagon House was designed by William Thornton—the first architect of the U.S. Capitol—as a winter residence for Colonel John Tayloe III, a wealthy Virginia planter and racehorse breeder, and his

wife, Ann Ogle Tayloe. Enslaved workers from the family's Mount Airy plantation constructed the home between 1799 and 1801.

The Tayloes entertained guests such as John Adams and Thomas Jefferson and invited President James Madison and his wife, Dolley, to live there after the British set fire to the White House in 1814. From the second floor of the home's semicircular bay, President Madison signed the 1815 Treaty of Ghent, ending the War of 1812.

The Tayloe family lived in the home until Ann's death in 1855, then rented it out for many years until the American Institute of Architects (AIA) purchased it in 1902, restoring the home to its former glory. Today it houses an architecture and design museum for the AIA Foundation, which operates its headquarters behind the Octagon House, where the home's outbuildings once stood.

Washington National Cathedral

3101 Wisconsin Ave. NW

Washington National Cathedral, officially known as the Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, is known for hosting national memorial services, celebrations and presidential funerals. But its history dates to the earliest days of the republic when George Washington and French architect Pierre L'Enfant envisioned "a great church for national purposes" as part of L'Enfant's 1791 plan for the nation's capital.

It took nearly a century to realize their vision and two centuries for the cathedral to be fully completed. In 1893, the Episcopal cathedral was chartered by Congress, and a spot for the church was selected on Mount Saint Alban—the city's highest point.

President William McKinley presided over the first ceremony held on its grounds: the 1898 dedication of the Peace Cross to mark the end of the Spanish-American War. In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt laid its granite cornerstone, which contained a stone retrieved from a Bethlehem field in modern-day Palestine.

Over the next 83 years, work continued on the English Gothic-style cathedral, which



was carved from Indiana limestone and built in the shape of a cross with no steel supports. Meanwhile, the church began welcoming worshippers of all faiths and hosting national events such as the prayer service held before each presidential inauguration.

The cathedral, completed in 1990, is the sixth-largest in the world, with a 30-story-tall central tower, multiple chapels, intricate wooden carvings and 215 stained-glass windows, including one embedded with moon rock. Inside, you will find a crypt where Helen Keller and President Woodrow Wilson are interred. Outside, you can stroll through a medieval-style garden with a 13th-century Norman arch, explore old-growth forests that wind through the site, or hunt for the 112 gargoyles and grotesques that adorn the church (look for one of Darth Vader!). As a designated house of prayer, the cathedral also offers worship services daily and special events, including choir performances, concerts and organ recitals, year-round.



Mount Vernon Trail

Want to experience more of the natural side of the nation's capital? Check out the Mount Vernon Trail. The 18.5-mile trail follows the Potomac River from the Virginia side, winding through historic sites and offering scenic views of the city along the way.

The trail starts at Mount Vernon and heads north to Theodore Roosevelt Island Park, but it can also be accessed from the George Washington Memorial Parkway, and the Metro's blue and orange lines stop at several trail access points.

Just outside Mount Vernon, you'll pass through land that was once part of George Washington's expansive plantation. Continue on past Jones Point Lighthouse, which was initially preserved by the DAR's Mount Vernon Chapter as one of the nation's last river lighthouses, and through the historic Old Town Alexandria waterfront, which offers dockside dining and boutique shopping.

Abingdon Plantation Ruins

2401 Smith Blvd., Arlington, Va.

Sitting on a grassy hill a few hundred feet from the north terminal of the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport are the ruins of the historic Abingdon Plantation. The plantation, built in 1695

by the Alexander family, was home to George Washington's adopted stepson, John Parke Custis, who purchased the plantation in 1778 so he could move his family closer to the Washingtons at Mount Vernon.



After Custis' untimely death from camp fever in 1781 at Yorktown, the estate came back into the Alexander family's hands. One of its inhabitants was General Alexander Hunter, a U.S.

marshal for the District of Columbia and a friend to several presidents. Gen. Hunter died in 1849, leaving the estate to his brother, Bushrod Hunter, and Bushrod's son, Alexander Hunter II. During the Civil War, father and son left Abingdon to join the Confederate Army, and the Union Army confiscated and occupied the property. After the war, Alexander II returned and sued the government for the rights to Abingdon. Future President James A. Garfield successfully argued his case before the Supreme Court.

Though the younger Hunter wrote nostalgically of Abingdon in his 1904 book, *Johnny Reb and Billy Yank*, describing its lush orchards and terraced lawns, he sold it soon after recovering it. Surrounding industrial and rail development ultimately led to the demise of the estate, which burned down in 1930 under suspicious circumstances.

In the 1990s, preservationists launched a campaign to save the grounds. Today you can explore the remnants of Abingdon's brick foundation in a park behind the airport or see artifacts from the home displayed inside the terminal.

Old Stone House

3051 M Street NW

Nestled between shops and restaurants on a busy street in the Georgetown Historic District, the Old Stone House stands like a pre-Revolutionary time capsule. Built in 1765 in what was then the British colony of Maryland, it is the oldest, least changed building in Washington, D.C., with its fieldstone walls and oak ceiling beams still intact.

Originally the home was preserved not so much for its historic architecture but because of a mistaken connection to George Washington. Legend had it that the Old Stone House was the site of an inn, known as Suter's Tavern, where Washington negotiated with landowners to acquire land for the new federal district. Turns out the tavern was



actually four blocks away and had been torn down decades before.

Nonetheless, the Old Stone House has its own interesting history. Initially constructed as a one-room dwelling, it was expanded around 1775 to include a rear kitchen and second and third floors. By the early 1800s, the bottom floor was rented out to businesses, most notably a clock shop owned by John Suter Jr. (son of John Suter, owner of Suter's Tavern).

The house was restored by the National Park Service and opened as a museum in 1960. Today it offers a glimpse into a typical Colonial home, with period furnishings donated by Georgetown residents, an English-style garden and a grandfather clock Suter likely built in the house more than 200 years ago.

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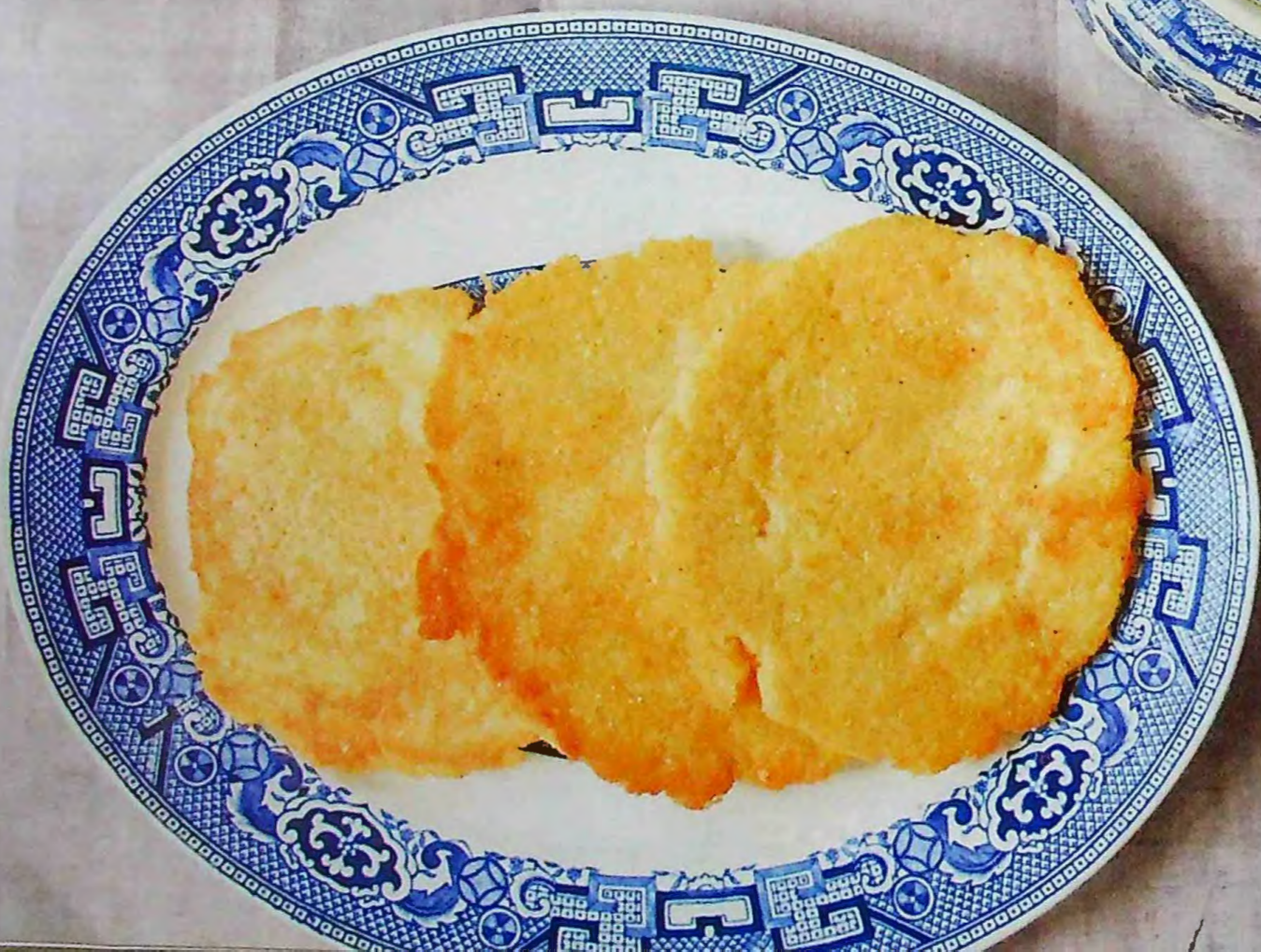
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Recipe for an Early American Meal

*Served With a
Side of History*

— By Alessandra Zinicola Lopez —



In early America, cooking was primarily a woman's job. And with no air fryers, slow cookers or fast-food restaurants, much of a woman's day could be spent preparing meals for the family.

This involved starting and maintaining the kitchen fire, gathering and canning fresh fruits and vegetables, and fetching meat from the smokehouse—tasks that all had to be done before even cooking breakfast. Oftentimes, older generations of enslaved people and servants taught younger generations the ways of the kitchen. If cooks or homemakers were literate, they were able to take advantage of British and European cookbooks, though recipes often featured hard-to-obtain ingredients for those living in the Colonies.

Balancing the 'Sumptuous With the Simple'

In 1796, 21 years after the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Amelia Simmons wrote the first cookbook by an American to be published in the United States—*American Cookery*.

The first edition, printed in Hartford, Conn., by Hudson and Goodwin, was just 47 pages long and contained recipes for stews, pies and roasts. Simmons borrowed heavily from British cookbooks, but she made adaptations to include ingredients native to America, such as cornmeal.

In *American Cookery*, Simmons included elaborate recipes for delicacies such as Queen's Cake, which counted rosewater, wine and a pound of sugar among its many ingredients; and Plumb Cake, a type of fruit cake that was made with 21 small eggs and expensive ingredients. But she also included simpler recipes for foods such as johnnycakes, which used familiar ingredients such as cornmeal, flour and milk, and gave instructions for making preserves, marmalade, puddings and more.

"They symbolized the plain, but well-run and bountiful, American home," Keith Stavely and Kathleen Fitzgerald write in an



Amelia Simmons' **INDIAN PUDDING**

Simmons included three versions of an Indian pudding in *American Cookery*. The first recipe has the shortest bake time.

3 pints scalded milk
7 spoons fine Indian meal

Stir well together while hot, let stand till cooled; add 7 eggs, half pound raisins, 4 ounces butter, spice and sugar, bake one and half hour.

article for *Smithsonian Magazine*. "A dialogue on how to balance the sumptuous with the simple in American life had begun."

American Cookery was a hit—so much so that a second edition was printed in Albany, N.Y., the same year. The cookbook sold well for more than 30 years, with great success in New England, New York and the Midwest.

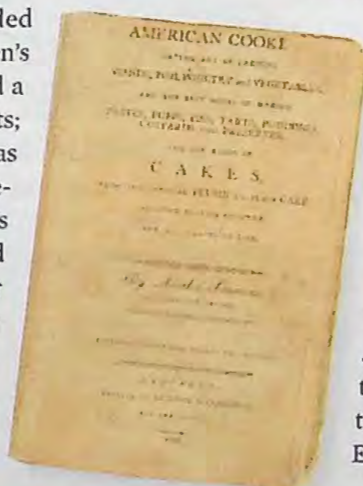
Uncovering the Histories of Black Chefs

During the 18th and early 19th centuries, Black cooks were also tasked with preparing meals—but for years, their contributions to American cuisine have been overlooked. Now, many historians are researching and discovering how enslaved people and their descendants transformed the ways Americans eat.

"So much of our history is actually hidden in plain sight,"

Dr. Jessica Harris, a culinary historian and author who is Black, told *The Washington Post* in 2021. "We have for generations and generations and generations in this country been in the room where it happened, but often never acknowledged as having been in the room."

Historians believe that James Hemings, one of Thomas Jefferson's slaves, was in the famed "room where it happened" when he cooked the historic meal shared by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and Jefferson in 1790, which the three enjoyed while engaging in political negotiations. Hemings is also credited with introducing European-style macaroni and cheese, French fries,



crème brûlée and ice cream to America, according to *The New York Times*.

In 1827, Robert Roberts, a Black enslaved person, wrote *The House Servant's Directory*. Roberts' book was a "domestic guide" that offered advice for servants, but also contained recipes and guidance on how to buy poultry, prepare beverages, and make jams and jellies, according to *Smithsonian Magazine*.

Leaving a Legacy Through Cooking

In the early 1800s, a widow named Elizabeth Goodfellow ran a popular bakery and pastry shop in Philadelphia. Goodfellow was well-known for making the best desserts and sweets in the area, often catering to the city's wealthiest families. But she was also renowned for running a cooking school in the kitchen of her shop—which is now considered to be America's first cooking school.

"Mrs. Goodfellow was described by those who knew her as a no-nonsense, practical cook and teacher with a focus on using only the finest quality and freshest ingredients in her recipes," Becky Diamond writes in *Mrs. Goodfellow: The Story of America's First Cooking School* (Westholme Publishing, 2012).

Goodfellow never published a cookbook, but her legacy—and recipes—lived on through the students she taught. During the early 1820s, Eliza Leslie, the daughter of Lydia Baker and Robert Leslie, attended Goodfellow's cooking school. Leslie's father had died years earlier, and she and her mother eased the

Eliza Leslie's DOUGH NUTS

- Three pounds of sifted flour
 - A pound of powdered sugar
 - Three quarters of a pound of butter
 - Four eggs
 - Half a large tea-cup full of best brewer's yeast
 - A pint and a half of milk
 - A teas-spoonful [sic] of powdered cinnamon
 - A grated nutmeg
 - A table-spoonful [sic] of rose-water
- Cut up the butter in the flour. Add the sugar, spice, and rose-water. Beat the eggs very light, and pour them into the mixture. Add the yeast (half a tea-cup, or two wine-glasses full) and then stir in the milk by degrees, so as to make it a soft dough. Cover it, and set it to rise. When quite light, cut it in diamonds with a jagg-iron, or a sharp knife, and fry them in lard. Grate loaf sugar over them when done.

During her lifetime, Eliza Leslie wrote nine cookbooks. In *Domestic French Cookery*, she translated French recipes into English.



financial hardship by turning their home into a boardinghouse. Some historians believe that Leslie attended the cooking school to gain culinary experience to help with the venture.

Leslie's first cookbook, *Seventy-Five Receipts, for Pastry, Cakes, and Sweetmeats*, was published in 1828 and was based on lessons and instructions she had learned at Goodfellow's cooking school. (During the

Colonial period, recipes were called "receipts.") Though some believe she simply copied Goodfellow's recipes, the preface of her book states that all recipes included are "original, and have been used by the author and many of her friends with uniform success." Leslie's cookbook was a tremendous success, going through 11 editions between 1828 and 1839.

Leslie wrote nine cookbooks—some of which were heavily specialized. In 1832, using the French she learned as a child, Leslie translated French recipes into English for her book *Domestic French Cookery*. In 1847, she wrote an entire cookbook on recipes using cornmeal, titled *The Indian Meal Book*.

Although we have more appliances and kitchen gadgets today, we can still trace our food traditions, techniques and recipes to the chefs of the Colonial era. ○

Alessandra Zinicola Lopez is a member of the Constellation Chapter in Orlando, Fla.



Robert Roberts' EXCELLENT LEMONADE

Robert Roberts included two recipes for homemade lemonade in his book. Here is one he deemed "excellent."

Take one gallon of water, put to it the juice of ten good lemons, and the zeasts [sic] of six of them likewise, then add to this one pound of sugar, and mix it well together, strain it through a fine strainer, and put it in ice to cool; this will be a most delicious and fine lemonade.



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The Great Oyster Craze

GETTY IMAGES

America's Love Affair With Abundant 'Luscious Bivalves'

By Kim Hill

Found in the tidal waters of every continent except Antarctica, oysters have been consumed since the dawn of humanity. Heaps of oyster shells, or middens, were found in the excavations at Mycenae in Greece and the Romans cultivated oysters in Mediterranean lagoons. Author Libby H. O'Connell writes in *The American Plate* (Sourcebooks, 2014) that middens found along the Louisiana coastline indicate American Indians "were enjoying oyster feasts before the first Olympics in ancient Greece."

Explorers arriving in the New World in the 1600s were thus well acquainted with oysters. The shellfish were plentiful in England, though not everyone was a fan. William Shakespeare termed them "foul," and prominent physician Thomas Moffett (also spelled Muffett) wrote of oysters, "he was no Coward that first ventered on them."

England's mollusks, however, paled in comparison with the abundance of those found off the New World's Eastern Seaboard. In the early 1600s, the oysters in Chesapeake Bay were so numerous they could filter the entire bay in a week. No doubt after observing the Algonquian people scooping up handfuls of oysters a few feet from shore and roasting them over an open fire, the Jamestown settlement came to rely heavily on oysters, especially in its early years. Captain John Smith sent a group of at least 60 settlers to the mouth of the James River in the spring of 1609 to live almost solely on oysters for nine weeks to reduce the strain on the limited food supply at the fort.

The size of *Crassostrea virginica*, the eastern oyster that once inhabited waters from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, also astounded Europeans. Excavations from a Jamestown pit have yielded oyster shells measuring nearly 6 inches long. A 1697 account of Labadist missionaries in Brooklyn, N.Y., noted some local oysters were a foot long. A Swiss visitor to Virginia in 1701 wrote that the oysters there "surpass those in England by far in size, indeed, they are four times as large."

AMERICA'S FIRST FAST FOOD

From the earliest European contact through the 1800s, oysters were cheap and abundant, essentially America's first fast food. Plentiful and therefore easily obtained, oysters were consumed by all classes of society. But they were not just the food of the immigrant or workingman, standing on a sawdust-covered floor at the bar of a saloon. The most palatial dining rooms also served oysters on linen-dressed tables. In the mid-1800s, "oyster parties were the rage among New England aristocracy, as they were in every sophisticated metropolis," Keith Stavelly and Kathleen Fitzgerald write in *America's Founding Food: The Story of New England Cooking* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

Fried; broiled; stewed; roasted; pickled; raw; made into stews, soups or fritters; or baked in a pie, oysters appeared in recipes stretching back to medieval England. An 18th-century recipe for oyster ketchup called for 100 oysters and three pints of white wine flavored with lemon peels, mace and cloves. Susannah Carter's 1772 printing of *The Frugal Housewife* included instructions for "ragoo oysters," a decadent recipe that contained pistachio nuts, cream, nutmeg, butter and white wine. At Mount Vernon, oyster soup would typically have been served in the winter, when abundant bivalves from the Potomac River could be kept fresh and cold. Dolley Madison's notes on entertaining indicate Potomac oysters were served with ice cream at her parties in Washington, D.C.



This unusual-looking item is called an oyster server. It was made from silver by the Whiting Manufacturing company of New York City between 1916 and 1924 and is decorated in the "Heraldic" pattern. It is part of the DAR Museum's collection.

Before commercial refrigeration or large-scale preservation, folklore and printed cookbooks alike admonished oyster-lovers to eat the mollusks only in months with an "R" in their names (September through April). Stavelly and Fitzgerald write that concern about oyster quality can be traced as far back as England's early modern era beginning in the 14th century. In America, oyster-lovers kept their mollusks fresh by imitating nature as much as possible. By the early 1800s, tavern owners were stocking their cellars with oysters in late fall, "burying them in beds of damp sea sand mixed with cornmeal ... they watered the beds twice a week, with oysters dug out of the pile as needed," Stavelly and Fitzgerald write in *America's Founding Food*. Households at the time followed similar practices.

Dolley Madison's notes on entertaining indicate Potomac oysters were served with ice cream at her parties in Washington, D.C.



First Lady Dolley Madison

FROM COAST TO CRAZE

As the population grew, harvesting methods evolved to keep up with demand. Raking, with the harvester standing either in shallow waters or in a small boat or canoe, improved yields but depleted the oyster bars closest to shore. This practice was followed by tonging. Hand tongs—long, scissor-like tools with metal rakes on the ends—were developed to pick up oysters from a boat and used from at least the early 1700s. The oysterman stood on the side of the boat, opened the tongs and reached to the bottom of the water, which might be 15 feet deep. Closing the tongs, he scooped oysters between the rakes, then lifted the tongs into the boat and dumped the oysters. The tongs were long, heavy and difficult to manage.

As the 19th century progressed, so did America's obsession with oysters. Advancements in commercial fishing brought dredging—a more efficient method of harvesting by scraping



First Lady Lucy Webb Hayes ordered this porcelain oyster plate, originally part of a large state dinner service, for the White House in 1879. Made by Haviland and Co. in Limoges, France, the plate is part of the DAR Museum's collection.

oysters from the bay's bottom with a metal rake-like device and a bag dragged behind boats. Dredging led to overharvesting. Maryland banned dredging in the Chesapeake Bay as early as 1830, but other states ignored the environmental impact and allowed the practice. Canning technology made coastal cities like Baltimore the site of booming businesses, which shipped canned oysters along newly built rail lines to inland cities including Detroit, Chicago and St. Louis. Halfway between Chicago and St. Louis, in Springfield, Ill., U.S. Representative Abraham Lincoln enjoyed them; oyster shells were found in an old well pit at the Lincoln home.

Oysters were served both stewed and scalloped in the Lincoln White House. Specific utensils and special plates for serving oysters, often shaped like oyster shells and sometimes painted to resemble them, reflected the mollusk's popularity.

During the 1800s, Americans were enveloped in "a great oyster craze," according to author Frederick J. Parks. "No evening of pleasure was complete without oysters; no host worthy of the name failed to serve 'the luscious bivalves' as they were actually called, to his guests," Parks writes in *The Celebrated Oysterhouse Cookbook* (Seven Hills Books, 1986).

In coastal cities, oysters were sold everywhere. They were hawked and eaten on the streets and even peddled from house to house in cities. They were served in oyster houses, oyster parlors, lunchrooms and even oyster cellars—often the basements of homes. By 1874, New York City alone had more than 850 oyster cellars, saloons, houses and lunchrooms. "The way you might walk down the street now and a food truck sells you a taco for a snack, in those days you'd get oysters on the half shell," Staveland and Fitzgerald write. The idea of oyster houses

did not originate in the United States, but "the popularity and originality of their presentation made them a truly American institution," Parks writes.

LOVE AFFAIR ENDS

At the peak of production from 1880 to 1910, the United States produced as much as 160 million pounds of oyster meat per year, according to the National Marine Fisheries Service, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In comparison, the annual yield in 2018 was 45 million pounds.

By the early 20th century, oysters had been overfished, becoming less abundant and thus more costly. In addition, the 1906 passage of the Food and Drug Act, requiring more stringent regulations for handling food items, significantly raised costs for oyster-packing houses. Many went out of business. And in 1924, a typhoid outbreak tied to oysters led to a public shunning of the mollusk.

Oysters have never again regained their popularity as a food eaten for breakfast, lunch and dinner by the young, old, rich and poor. ○

Do you love oysters?

Email us at americanspirit@dar.org
and let us know your favorite oyster recipe!

What's for Dinner?

— By Bill Hudgins —

*Labor-intensive
preservation methods
kept meat on
our ancestors' tables*

The first Europeans in America boggled at its bountiful quantities of game animals, birds, fish and other seafood. In his *General History of Virginia*, Captain John Smith wrote that, “we daily feasted on fish, fowle and diverse sorts of wild beasts, as fat as we could eate (sic) them.”

Settlers brought domesticated animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and poultry, which grazed freely and flourished. Despite near-disasters at Jamestown and Plymouth, within a few years meat was standard fare on Colonial tables.

Meat preservation was a life-or-death necessity. One had to lay aside enough to last the family through the winter and even into summer when fresh meat spoiled rapidly in the heat. Slave owners had to store enough not only for themselves and their families but also for their slaves. As monticello.org describes, after salting and smoking, “preserved pork, beef, mutton and fish were then rationed to slaves, hired workers, and (Thomas) Jefferson’s household.”

In England, meat was a rare treat for poorer families. Hunting was usually not an option, being a privilege for wealthy

landowners, according to plimoth.org. This was not the case in the Colonies, though many Colonists had never farmed or hunted before and had to learn to feed themselves.

According to “Meat Preparation and Preservation in Colonial America” by D.M. Kinsman, early settlers brought copies of Thomas Tusser’s 1573 book, *Five Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie*, as a primer on agriculture and animal hus-

bandry. Early Colonial women relied on books such as the 1615 publication *The English Housewife: Containing the Inward and Outward Vertues which ought to be in a Compleat Woman* for instructions on preserving and cooking foods.

In the 18th century, homemakers consulted volumes such as Hannah Glasse’s immensely popular 1747 work *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* to select, preserve and prepare food.

Preservation techniques impede or prevent bacteria, mold and fungi from spoiling fresh food. The principal methods Colonial Americans used were centuries old: salting, smoking, brining and pickling, potting, and drying. Salting and smoking were often used together to enhance meat’s flavor and extend shelf life—the process was known as “dry curing.”

Salted cod

|||||

Salting was a common preservation method for fish—especially cod.



Wait for a Cold Day

Traditionally, cattle and hogs were slaughtered in late fall after cold weather set in. The cold slowed spoilage while the meat was butchered and processed. Also, with natural fodder dying off, fall was the time to cull older or less productive animals so farmers could feed younger, healthier and more productive animals until spring.

Slaughtering, butchering and putting up meat was messy and labor-intensive, with whole families pitching in to accomplish the task. If one had nearby neighbors, the day could become a community event with many hands dividing the labor and sharing the fruits.

Salting and smoking dehydrate meat, removing moisture that allows microorganisms to flourish. In his book *A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America* (Columbia University Press, 2005), James E. McWilliams describes how 17th-century Maryland settlers Robert and Rebecca Cole and their sons preserved pork. After slaughtering a young pig, Robert Sr. butchered the carcass into sections called flitches that the boys put into a tub of salt. They turned the flitches repeatedly, working the salt thoroughly into the meat. Meanwhile, their father collected the offal—which literally means “fall off”—to make sausage and other products.

Next, they hung the flitches on metal hooks in the barn to dry for several days. The Coles did not have a smokehouse, so when the meat was ready, they brought it inside to hang in a smoke closet—a small, sealed chamber through which wood smoke from the fireplace passed. Once they judged the meat was thoroughly cured, they would wrap it in cloth and hang it in a cool spot in the house until needed.

Like today's barbecue aficionados, settlers developed individual salting and smoking “recipes” to enhance flavor. Some added spices, brown sugar, pepper and saltpeter, which preserved the pink color of the meat. Colonial Williamsburg's recipe, for example, calls for 25 pounds of coarse salt mixed with 2 pounds of brown sugar and 2 ounces of saltpeter.

The mixture was laboriously worked by hand into the meat, which was then packed tightly into tubs with drain holes that let the “liquor”—salty fluids from the meat—escape. After about six weeks in the salt, the meat hung in a smokehouse

for two weeks over a smoldering fire of green wood that further dried it and imparted a distinctive flavor. Some Colonists used saltboxes, or simple wood chests, instead of tubs.

Salting was also used to preserve fish. New England's salted cod competed successfully on the world market. But individuals also relied on salted fish to sustain them.

Smoking “recipes” included spices, brown sugar, pepper and saltpeter, which preserved the pink color of the meat.



Smoked pork

For example, mountvernon.org describes the labor-intensive process of preserving shad and herring harvested during their annual spawning run up the Potomac River. Slaves in boats caught the fish in long seine nets. Other slaves emptied the nets, gutted and cleaned the fish, then tightly packed alternate layers of salt and fish in large barrels.

The combined weight of salt and nearly 800 fish per barrel squeezed out excess water. It was not unusual for George Washington's slaves to harvest about 1 million herring and "tens of thousands" of shad per season. Salted fish could last for at least a year. Everyone at Mount Vernon ate salted fish, including slaves, who were each allotted 20 fish per month.

Ever the businessman, Washington sold the surplus to neighbors and merchants, who sold it to sugar plantations in the West Indies. His salted fish was considered a premium brand—in Jamaica, it commanded twice the price of competitors' products. His fishery brought in more income than his crops of wheat and other food items, according to mountvernon.org.

Wet Versus Dry

Instead of dry curing, meat could be preserved by "wet curing"—brining or pickling. Brining and pickling create a highly acidic environment that deters microorganism growth. Brined or pickled meat was regarded as moister and more flavorful than salt and smoke-cured meat.

Colonial cookbooks contained numerous recipes for brining and pickling. For example, Glasse's *Art of Cookery* noted "One brine or pickle for 100 pounds of beef curing consisted of four quarts rock salt, pounded fine; four Ounces of saltpetre; and four pounds of brown sugar mixed well and water added."

Vinegar or wine could also be used for short-term preservation such as a month, according to Glasse. Her recipe, or "receipt," consisted of "spices and herbs and Rhenish wine." The meat was covered with this concoction in an earthenware jar and sealed until needed.

Quick Bites

Potting was a popular short-term preservation method. This involved grinding or pounding cooked meat into a paste; mixing in spices, butter or other fat; and then tightly packing the result into earthenware jars that were sealed with melted butter or rendered fat such as lard.

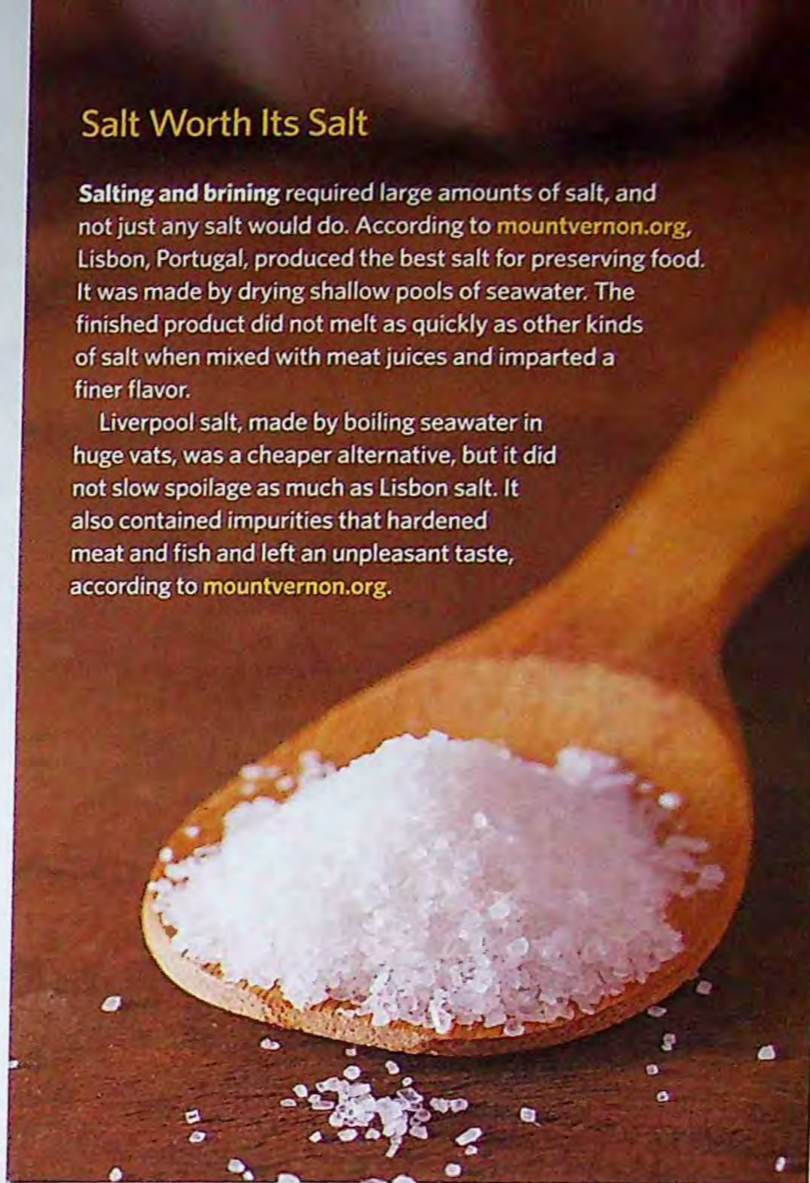
Potted meats were convenience foods, according to "Fast Food in Colonial America" on the Penn State Medieval Technology and American History website. They helped weary Colonial cooks put a quick meal on the table. Remove the fat, slice the meat into serving portions, give it a quick warm-up, and dinner is ready.

Fish were also potted, a process called caveaching. Fried fish were packed into jars with a vinegar pickle topped off with a layer of oil. Virginia tavern keeper Mary Randolph's 1824 cookbook, *The Virginia Housewife*, boasted that her caveached fish recipe was "a very convenient article, as it makes an excellent and ready addition to a dinner or supper."

Salt Worth Its Salt

Salting and brining required large amounts of salt, and not just any salt would do. According to mountvernon.org, Lisbon, Portugal, produced the best salt for preserving food. It was made by drying shallow pools of seawater. The finished product did not melt as quickly as other kinds of salt when mixed with meat juices and imparted a finer flavor.

Liverpool salt, made by boiling seawater in huge vats, was a cheaper alternative, but it did not slow spoilage as much as Lisbon salt. It also contained impurities that hardened meat and fish and left an unpleasant taste, according to mountvernon.org.



Drying, or jerking, meat was another ancient technique. It was different from dry curing in that the meat or fish was cut into thin strips and as much of the fat removed as possible. It was also much faster. The strips were hung on racks so the sun and wind could dry them. In areas of high humidity or if time was short, the racks were placed over a smoldering fire that dried and smoked the strips. Rubbing spices into the flesh before drying added additional flavor.

Jerky was the main ingredient in pemmican, a long-lasting, nutritious, energy-dense food used by American Indians. Believed to be a Cree word meaning rendered fat, pemmican is made by pounding dried meat into a powder, then mixing it with pounded fruit, nuts, honey and rendered fat such as suet or lard. Cut into strips, pemmican was easy to carry, did not spoil, and provided calories and essential nutrients on the trail.

Today, fresh meat is available year-round, but each of these preservation techniques that fed our ancestors is still in use, because we like their flavor and have inherited dishes made from them. Next time you fry up some bacon and eggs, thank your ancestors for passing the tradition down to your breakfast table. ○

Colonial Thirst Quenchers

/ By Lena Anthony /

When you are thirsty, there's no shortage of beverages that can satisfy this basic human need. But have you ever considered what the Colonists drank? We dug up a few fascinating facts that show how far our hydration habits have evolved in the past 400 years—and how they have stayed the same.





**“Rations
are low,
especially our
Beere (sic).”**

—WILLIAM BRADFORD
PLYMOUTH COLONY
FOUNDER

GETTY IMAGES

Beer Was the Mayflower Drink of Choice

When the *Mayflower* set off from Plymouth, England, on September 16, 1620, it was holding about 100 passengers and enough beer for everyone on board to drink a gallon a day.

But this amount of alcohol didn't enhance the experience. For starters, the beer was actually “small beer” with a lower alcohol content—and having it on board was a matter of health and safety. “Given the preservative properties of the hops, beer on voyages was far superior to water, which, if it wasn't polluted to begin with, often turned brackish,” Dane Huckelbridge explains in *The United States of Beer: A Freewheeling History of the All-American Drink* (HarperCollins, 2016).

Although the *Mayflower* was well stocked when it left port, numerous weather-related setbacks delayed the Pilgrims' arrival on New England's shore. On December 19, future Plymouth Colony founder William Bradford wrote in his journal that rations were low, “especially our Beere.”

As moments in history tend to do, this one grew in the retelling, said Jay Brooks, author of the Brookston Beer Bulletin blog. “Expeditionary crews sent from the anchored ship had been checking the lay of the land for weeks, looking for a suitable place to build homes,” he writes in a 2013 post. “Yes, food and supplies had run low. But more importantly ... the cold was brutal, passengers were dying and the ship's crew wanted to return to Europe. Meanwhile, there was fowl and fresh water waiting on shore. It wasn't the shortage of beer that finally prompted the Pilgrims to give up the ship. ... It was plain common sense.”

Water, Water Everywhere

Despite the abundance of water in Colonial America, particularly New England, this natural resource was not all that popular as a beverage. It was widely considered to be a carrier of harmful diseases such as smallpox and yellow fever. This was especially true in America's earliest cities, where everything from slaughtered pigs to raw sewage and emptied chamber pots was dumped into the local water source.

Back in Plymouth, where many Pilgrims were suspicious of the water, at least a few were willing

Colonists in urban areas made do by collecting rainwater, boiling before drinking it or mixing water with alcoholic beverages.

to give it a chance. "He drank nothing but water for many years, indeed until five or six years before his death; and yet by the blessing of God he lived in health to a very old age," Bradford wrote about William Brewster, one of Plymouth's senior elders, who apparently loved the stuff.

Water-drinking Colonists in growing urban areas made do by collecting rainwater, boiling water before drinking it or mixing water with alcoholic beverages, Andrew Smith writes in *Drinking History: Fifteen Turning Points in the Making of American Beverages* (Columbia University Press, 2013).

Whether the water was potable depended on where one lived. In Charleston, S.C., the water was said to contain sand and dirt. The water in Albany, N.Y., was deemed "not very agreeable" by Peter Kalm, a Swedish naturalist and botanist who was dispatched to America in 1749 to explore its natural resources and report back to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

Generally speaking, clean water was widely available in rural areas, Melissa Swindell says in a National Museum of American History article from 2012. "Colonists on rural farms or on the frontier could find natural, clean sources of water, or could dig

wells to reach fresh water," she writes. Colonists in the city, meanwhile, drank "bottled" water from the countryside.

Tea-Water Was Big Business

"Bottled" water, better known to Colonists as tea-water, was drawn from wells on the outskirts of cities, where the water was still clean. As Swindell relates, workers known as tea-water men then sealed the water in kegs and transported it to the city. While everyone likely wanted tea-water, only the wealthy could afford it. Swindell estimates it would have taken the average tradesman a month to earn the money to purchase tea-water for a year.

Colonists used this clean, countryside water much as we use bottled water today. They drank it—either plain or mixed with other beverages, including beer, cider, milk and wine.

But as the name suggests, tea-water was primarily earmarked for making tea.

While coffee, tea and chocolate all arrived in the Colonies in the mid-17th century, it was tea that became America's favorite hot drink, "appearing at breakfast and supper as well as on the afternoon tea table," according to Smith.

This 18th-century engraving depicts a coffeehouse in Colonial America.



Like tea-water, imported teas were enjoyed primarily by wealthy Colonists. Those who couldn't afford the imports sipped teas made from local ingredients—like parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme. When the British taxed the Colonists' tea, setting off a historic chain reaction, patriotic Americans tweaked their tea-drinking habits. (See the November/December 2021 issue of *American Spirit* for a feature on yaupon holly tea.)

Alcohol Fueled the American Revolution

Alcoholic beverages played a critical role in moving the fight for American independence forward. From beer and hard cider to fruit wine, imported sweet wines, rum and whiskey, “not only were alcoholic beverages considered healthful and nutritious, but they also imparted pleasure and provided sustenance because they contained calories,” Smith writes.

During the French and Indian War, low-alcohol small beer was the drink of choice among troops. It was brewed locally and widely available. Although beer was imported at first to the Colonies, brewing soon became an American trade. By 1637, Massachusetts, New York and Virginia all boasted their own breweries.

But barley, a staple ingredient of beer, didn't grow well in the Colonies. Settlers “tried virtually anything to brew and flavor their beer, including wheat, cornstalks, maple sap, elderberries, gooseberries, nuts, bark, various roots, pine chips, hemlock and assorted leaves,” Smith writes. A popular variety was persimmon beer, while the most common was brewed from molasses.

Beer eventually made way for “cyder,” a drink Thomas Jefferson particularly enjoyed. Monticello's vast apple orchards birthed a cider-making operation that in 1809 produced 175 gallons of hard cider. In 1815, Monticello was unable to keep up with Jefferson's demand, as evidenced by a December letter to his neighbor, Fanny Brand, asking for samples of her cider so he could decide which casks to purchase.

The real drink of the Revolution was rum, which by 1657 was no longer imported from Barbados but produced locally, primarily in Massachusetts. Inexpensive and highly alcoholic, American-made rum quickly rose to prominence.

By the mid-18th century, there were more than 150 rum-making distilleries across New England, with Massachusetts distilleries alone producing 2.7 million gallons of rum annually.

Colonists each consumed nearly 4 gallons of rum annually by the time of the American Revolution, according to Ian Williams in *Rum: A Social and Sociable History of the Real Spirit of 1776* (New York Nations Books, 2005).

Washington used rum as both currency and motivation. According to Mount Vernon's Digital Encyclopedia of George Washington, rum helped him get elected to the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1758. He routinely provided an allowance of rum to his slaves at Mount Vernon. And in 1779, he wrote to the U.S. Commissary Department to request more rum for weary troops.

“Washington shared the view of many people at the time that liquor helped to keep tired people awake,” the digital

encyclopedia entry on rum says. “A supply of rum could mean the difference between an exhausted soldier and one ready to wage war.”

For entertaining, rum was the base for a variety of mixed drinks, including punch, a mixture of rum, citrus juice, sugar and water; and milk punch, which featured egg yolks, sugar



A Colonist pours his morning dram of rum.

and grated nutmeg. Sailors preferred grog, a simple mixture of rum and water.

Rum also had a shadowy side, like when it was used as currency in the African slave trade. “In 1759, slavers could purchase a male slave for 90 gallons of rum; by 1774, the price had jumped to 230 gallons,” according to Smith. Rum also had a negative effect on American Indian tribes, who accepted it in exchange for land or peace. But since they had no previous experience with such strong spirits, “one result was that drunkenness contributed to the social and economic collapse of many Indian tribes from the Appalachians to the Mississippi,” Smith writes.

Children were also fond of rum. In addition to drinking milk, water and the alcoholic small beer and cider, children were sometimes given watered-down rum or other spirits to calm them down. ○



< This 1870 engraving by Frederick Girsch shows General George Washington and officers (left to right) Johann de Kalb, Baron von Steuben, Casimir Pulaski, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, Marquis de Lafayette and John Muhlenberg with Continental Army troops during the American Revolutionary War.

'FATHER OF THE AMERICAN CAVALRY'

Casimir Pulaski fought for the freedom of two nations / By Bill Hudgins /



Kazimierz Michał Władysław Wiktor Pułaski, better known in America as Casimir Pulaski, was born March 6, 1745, in Warsaw, Poland, and died of battle wounds in South Carolina around October 11, 1779. During his short, adventurous life, Pulaski fought

to preserve his homeland and, when that struggle failed, emigrated to America, where he helped shape the novice Continental Army cavalry.

Casimir was the second of three sons born to Marianna Zielińska and Josef Pulaski. He was trained in battle from an early age, as the Pulaski family had been warriors for generations. Poland had once been a major power in Europe, but it was declining by the second half of the 18th century. Russia was pushing hard to make the country a protectorate, and the government was considering this, according to Pulaski's battlefields.org biography.

Pulaski and a group of other aristocrats and patriots formed a group called the Confederation of Bar in 1768 that rebelled against the wavering government. Pulaski fought heroically in multiple actions. The rebellion began to collapse after a failed attempt to abduct the pro-Russian King Stanislaw II Augustus in 1771. The Bar collapsed in 1772, and leaders including Pulaski were accused of attempted regicide. He managed to flee, while Russia, Prussia and Austria divided Poland among themselves in what is known as the First Partition.

Pulaski roamed Europe for a time and landed in France, where the army refused to admit him into its ranks. His luck changed in early 1777 when he met Benjamin Franklin. Franklin had heard of Pulaski's exploits and urged him to go to America to help the Continental Army. According to Pulaski's Battlefield Trust biography, French officials endorsed the idea and offered to pay for his passage to get rid of a diplomatic embarrassment.

Pulaski left France in June 1777 and, bearing a letter of recommendation from Franklin, arrived in Massachusetts about six weeks later. He quickly went to the army's encampment near Philadelphia and asked General George Washington for a post. Washington demurred, explaining that the Continental Congress would

need to approve a commission, but he allowed the frustrated cavalryman to remain with the army as an aide, according to *Casimir Pulaski, Cavalry Commander of the American Revolution* by retired U.S. Army Col. Francis Casimir Kajencki (Southwest Polonia Press, 2001).

As a result, Pulaski helped save the army from catastrophe at the September 11, 1777, Battle of Brandywine.

The Americans had failed to block all the fords across Brandywine Creek. Discovering this, British General William Howe staged a diversion at the front, while he took most of his 15,500 men upstream and across the ford

Congress gave Pulaski permission to form and lead an independent legion comprising cavalry and infantry. A number of Europeans fought with the Continental Army, and Pulaski's legion included American, Hungarian, German, Polish, Swedish, Italian and French volunteers.

to attack the American right flank. Seeing this, Washington rushed reinforcements to support the collapsing right flank.

Pulaski, still without a commission, begged Washington to let him lead a mounted countercharge to give the Patriots time for an orderly retreat. Washington gave Pulaski a mounted guard of about 30 men.

They charged into the British, halting the advance long enough for a successful withdrawal. Pulaski's impromptu cavalry troop conducted several other surprise attacks that day, including one that prevented the British from cutting off the only road away from the clash. After receiving Washington's report on the battle including Pulaski's achievement, Congress put him in charge of four horse brigades and commissioned him a brigadier general in "chief command of the American light dragoons" as "Commander of the Horse."

Kajencki notes that Pulaski had arrived when American officers were unhappy about the influx of foreigners claiming

military expertise and demanding admission to the army as high-ranking officers.

His contemporaries acknowledged his superior skills as a horseman and cavalry officer, noting that he fought furiously and inspired his men. At the same time, many resented his petulance and arrogance.



This engraving portrays General Casimir Pulaski at the Battle of Savannah on October 9, 1779, where he was mortally wounded.

However, Kajencki chalks up many of Pulaski's run-ins with fellow officers to professional jealousy and prejudice against foreigners. They resented that Pulaski was promoted ahead of them and they were expected to obey his orders. Pulaski's men were devoted to him, the author writes.

Pulaski fought in the October 1777 Battle of Germantown and spent the winter of 1777–1778 at Valley Forge. In early March 1778,

his cavalry helped stop a British attack on a large foraging party led by General Anthony Wayne in nearby Mount Holly, N.J. During the winter, Pulaski pressed Washington to allow him to create a European-style cavalry corps. He was frustrated when the general's staff rejected his ideas, and he even resigned his commission briefly in early 1778.

Pulaski soon rejoined the army when Congress gave him permission to form and lead an independent legion comprising cavalry and infantry and, just as important, to train them as he saw fit. A number of Europeans fought with the Continental Army, and Pulaski's legion included American, Hungarian, German, Polish, Swedish, Italian and French volunteers, according to the *New Georgia Encyclopedia*.

The legion suffered massive casualties during its defense of a major privateer base at Little Egg Harbor in New Jersey when a deserting officer betrayed its position and plans. The British attacked at night on October 6, 1778, bayoneting some 50 sleep-stunned legionnaires before withdrawing.

Congress sent the surviving units south in December 1778 to join the Southern Army when the British captured Savannah, Ga. On May 11, 1779, the legion tangled with British forces near Charleston, S.C., and again suffered casualties. In September 1779, the Southern Army, along with newly arrived French troops, began a campaign to recapture Savannah. After a brief

His contemporaries acknowledged his superior skills as a horseman and cavalry officer, noting that he fought furiously and inspired his men, though he could be reckless at times.

siege, the Patriots attacked on October 9, 1779. The attack failed, and Pulaski was mortally wounded in the groin by grapeshot. He died a few days later—the date is disputed—and a historical mystery was born.

Contemporary reports stated Pulaski was taken aboard the warship *Wasp*, but he developed gangrene and died within a few days, according to historian James S. Pula in "Whose Bones Are Those?: The Casimir Pulaski Burial Controversy" (*Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Spring 2016). Pula cites personal accounts attesting to Pulaski's being buried at sea almost immediately after his death because of the noxious odors of his injuries. When the ship returned to Charleston, a formal funeral was held, sans body.

Then in 1851, reports surfaced that Pulaski had not been buried at sea but at nearby Greenwich Plantation, owned by

the Bowen family. In December 1853, William Parker Bowen announced he had found a human skeleton buried on a bluff overlooking a creek. The size and condition of the skeleton, along with buttons and other items, indicated these were Pulaski's bones, Bowen declared.

Despite doubts, the remains were accepted as those of Pulaski, and they were installed in Savannah's Pulaski Monument in 1854. During renovation of the monument in 1996, scientists were allowed to examine the remains and conduct DNA analysis. However, the available technology could not extract suitable samples. The researchers saved the bone samples in hopes that future technology might be able to determine whether the remains were Pulaski's.

Perhaps more intriguing was the finding that the skeleton had female characteristics, including the conformation of the pelvis and the unusually delicate skull. The researchers suggested that Pulaski might have been "intersex," defined by the Intersex Society of North America as a person born with "a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male."

Researchers at Georgia Southern University in 2015 decided to take another look at the bones. This time they succeeded in extracting mitochondrial DNA, which is inherited from the mother, and compared it with that of a deceased Pulaski relative. The results were a match, leading the team to conclude that the skeleton was indeed Pulaski's, and that he appeared to be intersex.

Pulaski contributed significantly to the eventual Patriot victory. Numerous U.S. towns and counties bear his name, as does a fort outside Savannah, as well as schools, bridges, and military vehicles and vessels. October 11 is General Pulaski Memorial Day in the United States.

In 2009, the U.S. Senate posthumously awarded him honorary citizenship, a distinction that has only been bestowed eight times. He is rightly known as a "Father of the American Cavalry" and "Soldier for Liberty" in Poland. ○



A monument to Casimir Pulaski stands in Savannah, Ga.'s Monterey Square.

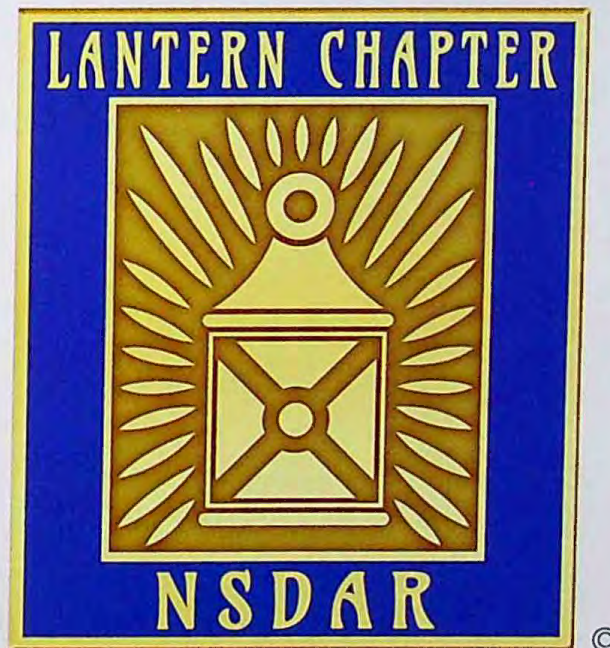
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How is Patriot defined?

DAR recognizes as Patriots not only soldiers, but also anyone who contributed to the cause of American freedom. To find out if your ancestor is recognized by the DAR as a Revolutionary Patriot, use the request form available online. Visit **www.dar.org** and click on "Membership."

How many members does the National Society have?

DAR has nearly 190,000 members in nearly 3,000 chapters worldwide, including chapters in 14 foreign countries and one territory. Since its founding in 1890, DAR has admitted more than 1 million members.

How can I find out more?

Go to **www.dar.org** and click on "Membership." There you'll find helpful instructions, advice on finding your lineage and a Prospective Member Information Request Form. Or call (202) 879-3224 for more information on joining this vital, service-minded organization.